

A COMMEN-
TARIE VPON THE FIF-
TENE PSALMES, CALLED *PSALMI*
Graduum, that is, Psalmes of Degrees:

FAITHFULLY COPIED OVT OF THE LECTVRES OF
D. Martin Luther, very fruitfull and comfortable for all Christian afflicted
consciencs so reade.

Translated out of Latine into English by

HENRY BULL.



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TO THE CHRISTIAN
READER, GRACE AND PEACE
in Christ Iesu.



ALBEIT the reading of the Scripture it selfe, and the simple text thereof without further helpes, hath matter enough to giue intelligence and instruction sufficient for the soule of mā to saluation, if with hart and diligence it be earnestly applyed and followed, as it should: yet notwithstanding the helpe of good cōmentaries & explications annexed withall, especially such as be learned and godly, is not hurtfull, but rather is much requisite, & greatly needefull, both for opening of places of difficulty, for dissoluing doubtes, and debating of controuersies, such as may and vse many times to happen. VVherefore most highly bound we are to the goodnes of our Lorde and Sauour, who hath herein so well provided for our infirmitie, in blessing this time of ours so plentifully with so many learned writers and worthy workers in his word. As in al times he hath done, but most chiefly in this time of ours is now to be scene. In which time as we haue to giue thanks for many other of late memorie famous & singular instruments of Christes glory, so namely for the author & compiler of this present work, Martin Luther. VVho although of many hitherto either hath not beene redde, and so not throughly knowne, or of a great num-

TO THE READER.

ber hated and maligned, or of some lightly regarded, or peradventure misjudged: Yet to such as either haue aduisedly redd him, or shall be disposed to take trial of him, hauing by experience of infirmities and affliction any skill to iudge of true diuinitie, shall be founde emonges many preachers & teachers of this our time, most chiefly worthie, not onely of iust commendation, but also to be compared with the chiefest: yea and so necessary for these times of the Church to be seene and redde, that the poore mourning soules of the afflicted can not well want him, & that for diuers purposes, especially for two principall causes:

First for true comfort & spiritual consolation to such weake minds as in cases of conscience are distressed, and wrastle in faith against the terrour of Satan, of death, of damnation, against the power of the lawe, and wrath of God, wherein I see very fewe or none (without comparison be it spoken) in these our daies to instruct more fruitfully with like feeling and experience.

Secondly for discerning and discussing the difference betwene the law and the Gospell, how these two partes are to be separated, and distincted a sonder as repugnant and contrary, and yet notwithstanding howe they both stand together in Scripture and doctrine, and yet in doctrine no repugnance. The knowledge whereof how requisite it is for all Christians to learne the miserable lack thereof will soone declare. For where these two be not rightly parted, but confused, what can followe there but confusion of conscience, either leading to despaire, or else to blind securitie, without any order in doctrine, or true comfort of saluation. As by examples of time is soone seene, namely if we loke into the later times of the Romish Church, where for want of right distinguishing betwene these two, great errors haue risen, and no great
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TO THE READER.

maruel. For where the Gospell is taken for the lawe, and the lawe for the Gospel, and Christ receaued but onely for a lawgiuer: and where things go by workes and lawe of deseruing, what hope or assurance of saluation can be there, considering our workes in their best kind to be so imperfect and vnprofitable? And what shall be said then of our naughtie workes? but especially, what shall be said then to the mourning & lamenting sinner, who seeth no good thing dwelling in him, but all wickednes? shall he then despaire, or how else will ye comfort him? For if Christ in his principall office be but a teacher of the lawe and of workes, and that be the chiefest thing to be required in a Christian, to worke saluation by the law of working: where is then grace, mercie, promise, faith iustifying, peace & rest of conscience, redemption from malediction of the law, if we be vnder the law still? briefly, where is the new couenāt of God made by his sonne, if the olde couenant made by Moses doe yet remaine? if it do not remaine, then must there needs be a difference betwene the law & the gospel: betwene the old Testamēt & the new: betwene the law of workes & the law of faith: betwene Moses, & Christ; betwene the master & the seruant: betwene Agar and Sara, and their two children. Now what difference this is, thou shalt not neede, Christian reader, by me to be instructed, hauing here the booke of Martin Luther to reade and peruse. VWho as in his former treatise before set forth vppon the Epistle to the Galathians, so likewise in these his commentaries vppon the Psalmes, doth so liuely & at large discourse that matter, with many other things moe, full of heavenly instruction & edificatiō, that hauing him, though thou hadst no other expositor vpon the holy Scripture, thou maist haue almost sufficient to make a perfect souldier against all the fierie darts of the tempting enemies. Againe, ha-

TO THE READER.

thing, all other, and lacking this writer, thou shouldst yet
 want some thing to the perfect practise and experience
 of a Christian diuine. Although I neede not in the be-
 halfe of this treatise vse any suche commendation, the
 booke being able sufficiently to commend it selfe: yet
 thus much by way of preface I thought good to notifie
 and premonish, whereby I might the rather animate and
 encourage thy studious diligence, good reader, to ouer-
 reade this booke. Wherin if it shall please thee to bestow
 the labour, as the paine, I trust, will not be tedious, so in
 the profite thereof I doubt not, but thy labour shall be
 recompensed with no lesse spirituall consolation to thy
 soules health; then the godly translator thereof M. Bull
 did receaue in translating of the same. Who as he once
 made his vow vnto the Lord for certein causes, to turne
 this booke from latine into english, so with no lesse fide-
 litye did well performe the same. Blessed be the Lord
 therefore, which both put him in mind first to take this
 worke in hand, and also graunted him life to the accom-
 plishment thereof: for so it pleased the Lord to continue
 his life so long, till this vowed worke was fully finished.
 And not onely that, but also after his trauell taken, gaue
 him to receaue such sweetenes thereby, as in neuer thing
 more in all his life. Now from him departed to turne to
 you that remaine aliuē; I meane all studious readers, as
 wel the that be wel willers to the gospel, as also that be e-
 nemies, & yet not called to the truth: both which sortes I
 haue here in few words to exhort, & to desire: first, such
 as haue mind to heare & reade the doctrine of truth, that
 they in life will follow that they heare and reade. Of the
 other companie this I haue to craue, that for as much as
 the gracious goodnes of the Lord hath raysed vp before
 their face such plenty of preachers, teachers, writers, and
 translators, whereby by all means to call them, and to do
 them

TO THE READER.

them good: they wisely againe for their partes wil consider what they haue to do: that is, to take the time before them, & not to refuse the riches of Gods great grace offered, least peraduenture hereafter ignorance will not excuse them, wheras now the light of truth so euidently appearing, wittingly and willingly they stoppe their eyes from seeing, & their eares from hearing. The Lord God of peace & father of all mercy & consolation for Christ Iesus his Sonnes sake, open our hartes and senses, that all preiudice & pertinacie set aside, we may both be willing to learne the right way of perfect faith and truth: and no lesse carefull in life to follow that we learne, growing vp in grace and knowledge more and more, till we attayne at length to the full measure, which is in Christ Iesu our Lord, Amen.

John Foxe.



THE PREFACE OF D. MARTIN LUTHER VPPON the fifteene Psalmes, called Psalmes of degrees.

YE haue heard me before many times declare in the beginning of my Lectures, for what cause I haue taken in hand to expound the holy Scriptures: not for any desire I haue to teach newe and straunge thinges which haue not beene knowne or heard before (for our dininitie is so wel known both in the Latine tongue and also in our owne Language, that we may seeme now to haue more neede of exhortation then instruction): but because the diligent teaching and setting forth of the worde of God is a kinde of Gods service or worship properly belonging to the newe Testament, being much more acceptable vnto God, more holy & excellent then were all the worshippings and sacrifices of the olde Testament, and therefore euen when the law was yet in his full strength the holy Prophets of God, utterly reiecting the burnt offerings and other sacrifices of the law, did commend, aboue all other, the sacrifice of praise. In like maner also ought we so much the more earnestly & diligently to set forth this kind of worship, because that, after so great blindness wherewith we haue liued, the wisdom of God hath (as the Sunne in the mid day) appeared and shined vnto vs againe. Therefore, like as it hath bene counted a maner of seruitude in times past, to heare a godly sermon (which men were wont to doe euen as they did their seruite labors): so must we now otherwise thinke, that they which teach, read, write or heare
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D. MARTINE LVTHER.

the holy Scriptures, are Gods true Priestes, which serue their God with a worthy and thankful kind of worship.

Albeit true it is also that we can not here attaine to such full knowledge of spirituall matters, but that dayly we haue neede to learne them again, to be exercised & confirmed therein, because of the continuall vexations and assantes of Satan, that as we are neuer without occasions of declining & falling from God: so likewise we should not cease to exercise our selues in the continuall meditation of the word of God, to the edifying both of our selues and of the Church. For there is nothing so pernicious as the opinion of many at this day, who as soone as they haue gotten neuer so little knowledge of this heauenly wisdom, thinke them selues by and by to be great doctors. For seeing that these thinges doe not consist in fine and eloquent talke, in reasoning and disputing, but in practise and experience, directed, not by mans reason, but by the spirit of God: they are miserably deceined that rest in bare and naked knowledge, which is but vnprofitable without experience and practise. In the olde Testament God appoynted but onely the ten commaundements, wherein he would haue his people to be exercised and occupied. But who was there euer amonge the Saintes of God which could say that he was able to attayne to the wisdom of the holy Ghost sette forth in those commaundements? And shall we which in the new Testament haue the whole Scripture set forth vnto vs, glory in the fulnes and perfection of our knowledge? Let vs not thinke therefore so highly of our selues, but let vs humble our selues before the holy Ghoste and confesse this wisdom to be infinite, and such as we could neuer fully attayne vnto, although we should spende our whole life in the study of the Scriptures. For although by the grace of God we are not without some knowledge, yet because we are continually oppressed with cloudes of tentations, we must haue recourse to this fountaine, yea to this fire, that our hartes may be kindled

The word must be continually exercised because of the continuall tentations whereof we are in daunger.

THE PREFACE OF

The lothig
and fulnes
of Gods
worde.

therewith, and that we may giue no place to Satan or our
owne flesh, whereby the first fruites of the spirit might be
quenched in vs. This lothing of Gods word, which riseth of
a false opinion of knowledge, is (alas) to common at this day.
For a remedy therefore against this euill, Moses commaun-
deth, that the law of God should be diligently set forth to the
posteritie, that is to say, should continually be taught and exer-
cised though it were neuer so well knowne before.

For this cause therefore I haue taken in hand to expounde
the Psalmes, that we might learne to abhorre this damnable
lothing of the word of God, and also to confirme, and (as it
were) to nourish the good spirit of God in vs by the exercise
and practise of the same. But the chiefest cause that moued me
hercunto is, for that we know this kind of worship, aboue
all other to please God, when we set forth his word in tea-
ching, in reading, in writing, in hearing, &c. And this one
thing ought to keep vs in the continual exercise of the word
of God. For, to teach, to exercise and to set forth the worde,
what is it else, but continually to offer sacrifice vnto God, con-
tinually to worship God, continually to be exercised in the
three first commandements. Lamentable it is to see what a
multitude there is of such as continually blaspheme God; either
in teaching false doctrine, or in persecuting the truth. Where-
fore very necessary it is that we, whiche in comparison of
them are so small a number, should serue the Lord our God, &
praise his holy name, which both hath giuen vs this life, and
promised the life to come. Moreouer, our owne daunger gi-
ueth vs good warning to take heede, that whiles we thus
neglect & loth the word, we feele not his heavy wrath &
plage vpon vs before we be ware. For when we are once
vveery of the worde, then followeth the contempt of the
same: which contēpt the Lord so punisheth, that he taketh his
word cleane away. Hereof the Papacie may be an example
for all posteritie, in the which we see it is so come to passe.

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D. MARTINE LVTHER.

I haue declared the causes which moued me to take in hand the opening & expounding of the Psalmes, namely that we might cōsecrate this hour to our redemer, & offer sacrifice vnto him, and by setting forth the mercies of God, we might, according to the grace giuen vnto vs, exercise our selues in the three first commaundements, vvhē as yet all the vvorld in blaspheming of God, most horribly sinneth against these commaundements. Great cause also hath moued me to exhort and earnestly to vvuarne you, so be vvare that ye fal not to the lothing or neglecting of the vvord. For if our doctrine be in any daunger, it commeth of this euill. The Papistes and Sectaries, albeit they annoy & trouble vs very much, yet by this occasion they drine vs the more diligently to seeke for the knowledge of the Scriptures. But this enormitie, the lothing of the vvord I meane, riseth of our selues, and is so much the more perilous and pernicious, for that we can not perceiue the daunger thereof. And then maketh Satan sure account of his victorie, vvhē we vvaxe negligent and loth the vvorde.

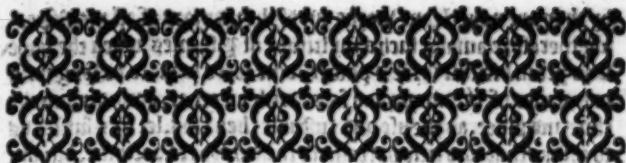


D. MARTINE WATHER.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th inst. in relation to the matter of the 1st inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
 Your obedient servant,
 D. MARTINE WATHER.



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CONCERNING THE TITLE WHEREFORE THESE ARE CALLED THE PSALMES OF DAVIDES.



Concerning the title of these psalmes, first here riseth a question, wherefore they are called psalmes of dauides, or dauides, or after some translations, of the ascending vpon. Wherein the opinions of the interpreters be diuers, all which it shall not be here needfull to rehearse. Some saye that they were so called because the Levites or psalmistes did sing them in the ascending vpon the temple; or on the steeres of the temple (sayn the history of the Kings it is written that they went vp by steeres to the temple,) and those steeres were numbered to be sixene, & that there were psalmes appoynted to be song on euery steere. Whether this be true or no, it is no great matter, but to me it seemeth not to be true. Albeit it can not be denyed but the hebreu word signifieth steeres or ascendings upward. Therefore I abide in the simple and plaine sense as much as I may, and iudge that they are so called because the Levites or psalmistes were wont to sing them vpon the steeres or some high place. Euen as with vs he that be- ginneth the psalmes or preacheth, standeth in a place about the altar, that he may be the better heard. For it seemeth not that these psalmes were song of the multitude which were in the temple, or of the rest of the quiers, but of certaine which were appoynted to sing them, or at least wise to begin in them on the steeres to the rest, so haue their names like dauides. Other of the psalmes haue their names of the singer: But how should a man knowe all their names & circumstances, especially after so long a time, when

by they are not cleane nor the out of the memory of all men: Seeing therefore among such abundance of Psalmes, when the same was yet in his full force & power, some were wont to be long with some manner of ceremony, and some with another, according to the time and place, as the use and custome then was. let this suffice us to thinke that this title pertaineth to no point of doctrine, but only to the ceremony of the singers, what manner of ceremony conuenient it was.

There were 24 orders of Priests which served in the temple. It might be therefore that sometimes the quire song alone, and not the people: sometimes but a part thereof, and sometimes they song by course, and afterwards also the people song & gaue a consent, as it were, vnto the other. But of these things (as I sayd) we can haue no certaintie, & also they helpe little to the vnderstanding of the Psalmes, and therefore I leaue to speake any further thereof, omitting also to shew why they are sitteene in number, & why they haue specially this title. For albeit we bulke our selues herein neuer so much, yet the matter remaineth in doubt and our labour is but in vaine.

Some expound these Psalmes of the press or ascendings vp, to signifie a completing or finishing, because they were commonly song in the end when the people should depart and the diuine seruice was finished, and therefore were called the Psalmes of the ascendings vp, for the finishing & closing vp of the diuine seruice. And in deede, because they are wise and set forth very notable doctrine, therefore they were most successfull for the conclusion and closing vp of all.

The 129. Psalm.

I called vnto the Lord in my trouble, & he hath deliuered me.

This Psalm. I iudge to be an invocation or prayer for the helpe of God against euill and persecuting tongues, by against such euils as persecute conuenient, that is to say, heretics bringing into the Church of God when they teach anything against true and sound doctrine. For that is a most perillous temptation when doctrine is assailed and impugned. For the Deuill hath two wayes whereby he wereth the Church of God, heresies and the sway of persecution.

The argument
of the Psalm.

on. For this cause our Saviour Christ also called him a lyer and a murderer. Therefore all the Psalmes which consist in these two points, namely to call upon God for his helpe and protection either against Satan the murderer, or against Satan the lyer: that is, either against pestilent doctrine, or els under the crosse and persecution, against cruell tyrantes: Of murderers there be diuers kindes, wherby Satan afflicteth the Church of God. Some he exerciseth with the feare of death; some with bandes; some with iniurie and oppression of enemies; some with hatred and thaire, and some with other troubles and calamities, and these do belong to persecution & cruelty. To lying we belong those things which he worketh by his ministers, specially in his church of God, through false doctrine and wicked opinions. Wherby he troubleth mens consciences: also through inuention of newe heresies, and the gladly with the venemous words of despairing, misthink and blasphemy; and so under the name of God, whom he may murdereth and carie th into hell: so as all these lying comprehendeth.

The Psalmes pray in two respects against Satan.

Satan how he is a murderer.

How he is a lyer.

Of these pestilous tentations wherby the church of God is haue grievously compassed, nobody in the world knoweth, but almighty mighte such a whole world cureth, that it hath beene long assailed with error, errours; for as for this 120. psalme (which is) both praye perspitiue to the former kind of remedy, and doctrine pestilence doctrine, albeit it toucheth the other also. For it can not be, but that false and lying teachers must be also bloody and cruel; being don't to defend their wicked doctrine & impiety by all manner possible. The Devil also beguileth the hearts of men with lying and falsehood; that he may that they stand up occasion of murder and bloodshed among many other examples of the church, the murderers of our first parents in paradise, and well be clear for Satan with lying persuaded them, that he might bring them to destruction: And be this the Church of God, through lying and sedition, verily compassed suffereth now every where, this like a common, the cruel hatred of the world; and all calamities for the confession of pure and sincere doctrine, it is therefore necessary for us to be wendeth prayer against this pestilent enigma in these our dayes, that they may haue no power to hurt so much as they would; and thus one, about the dayes, which is the last day of the world, as the prophet called, and the world is now troubled, and he heard much of this, and he heard much of this, and he heard much of this.

Our first parents deceived by lying.

This verse containeth not onely an example, but also doctrine whereby we may learne what we ought to doe in these temptations of the lying tonge; namely when we haue so doe much such peruerse and obstinate hereticks as will by no means be reduced from their false doctrine and expurg into the way of truth. For by long experience and after many and great conflicts haue we learned, that (as Paule sayeth) they are condemned even by their owne iudgement or the testimony of their owne conscience, and therefore after they haue bene once so wisely warned, they ought to be giuen quiet and aduised. And this haue we found especially in the chiefe defenders and maintainers of wicked doctrine, that for all that can be said or deuised, they will neuer be the better. It may be that some times they will geue place to the truth: for by the power of Gods word they may be conuincen, but they will neuer be conuerced. For if you stop their blasphemous mouthes one way, yet will they not so geue ouer, but seeke new occasions to fight against the truth. This is the historie, not onely of the Arians and other hereticks now verfare, but also the examples of these our dayes geue witness vnto the same. It is impossible therefore for vs utterly to stoppe the mouthes of hereticks. To reprove them and to conuince them, is all that we can doe: Also to perswade others ouer whom God hath giuen vs a charge, from their errors and pestilent doctrine. For a minister of Gods word ought to be well armed and instructed, that he may be able, not onely to teach the simple, but also to reprove and conuince the peruerse and obstinate. Herewith let vs be content; that such as the ynder our charge being thus foreshewen, with stanch firm and steadfast. But that we shall be able to conuert the peruerse and obstinate, let vs neuer hope. How often did Christ stoppe the mouthes of the Pharisees, not onely with manifest Scriptures, but also with the finger of God and with miracles: And yet remanent they still as before. In their impiety and hardness as they were before. And thus was heuilly conuincen and yet here he conuincen; and yet he let forth his seruents againe with greater audacity & successe then he did before. What shall we say of our Papistes? Doctores sacre euen the preysent churche they allowe them to haue a hand at reaching on and gaine they had.

The authors of wicked doctrine are incorrigible.

Arius.

Such therefore as willfully bring against the truth, and will not be conuerced, after we haue thus warning, let vs geue ouer; by the example of Dauid let vs with prayer fight against them:

Like

Like as we must pray also for our heretikes, that with the decey-
full shew of truth they be not seduced. For then this we can doe
nothing: For the deuill, the father of all heresies, is such a Proteus, Proteus was
so slippery and full of sleights, that we shall neuer knowe howe o-
f which way to lay hold on him. For if we stoppe one creek, he will one that
finde twenty moe whereby he will wind him selfe out againe, and could chaunge
(as the winde enclosed by force) will seeke and search euery way him selfe in-
howe he may get out. For against him chiefly we fight when we to diuers for-
haue to doe with heretikes. Wherefore by disputing and conten- mes, as nowe
ding we shal not preuaile against him. Notwithstanding we must into a beast,
doe herein what we may, that the ministers of Satan may be re- nowe into a
proued and conuincid for the behoofe of the Church. tree, and now
into some o-
ther thing
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But to the externall word we must ioyne prayer, whereby spe-
cially the wicked spirit is repelled and hybled. This prayer did
beate downe Arius, Manicheus, Sabellius. This confounded the
Iharisens and unbelouing Synagoge. This hath subdued the au-
thors of sects in these our dayes: And they that will not heare vs
exhorting and repprouing them, shall seele the force of our prayer
repaying out vpon God for the sanctifying of his name, & coming
of his kingdom. This is the only way to abrayde the tyranny: So
that these pestilent tongues, although they seeme to preuaile a-
gainst vs for a time, yet shall they at the length be bitterly rooted
out.

We must therefore goe wisely and circumspectly to worke in
this dangerous case, and cast away all confidence of our owne
wisdoms, yea although we haue the word of God neuer so much
on our side. For we fight not against flesh and blood, but against
spirituall wickednes. If we had to doe with flesh and blood onely,
we would so defend and fortifie our cause with matter and force of
argument sufficient, that nothing shoulde be able to counteruaile
the same. But now we haue experience, that when they are with
arguments and authority of Scripture better than sound, yet do
they still with tork and nayle hold fast their errour, and labour by
all meanes possible to defend the same. This time therefore I am
wont to compare to the time of Iudas, who coulde not excuse his
deuelishe purpose that he went about in betraying of Christ, and
yet he neuer rested untill he had brought the same to passe: for
Satan moued him so to doe. Euen so when these anchours and
maintayners of hereticall doctrine are manifestly conuincid, yet

Against he-
resies we
must fight
especially
with prayer.

Satan will not so geue them oier; nor suffer them to rest.

Wherefore it is necessary that herewithall we wisshie prayer, and with prayer specially we must fight, according to the notable and most comfortable example of Dauid here in this place, which sayth: I called vpon the Lord in my trouble, &c. As if he should say, in this daunger of wicked doctrine whilke I sought the conuersion of the false prophetes, and to bying them to the knowledge of their errour, all that I did, was but in vayne. For Satan who had possessed their heartes, is so slipperie, that it is not possible to take any holde on him. Whereouer, if ye looke to the number, they which set them selues agaynst me, were both more in number and more mightie in power. What should I misera- ble man doe in this distresse? Euen thus doe I. After that I haue diligently taught and set forth the waye of the Lord, both warn- ing my brethren of the daunger, & the other also of their errour, I ascende vnto my God by prayer, and shewe vnto him my ne- cessitie, being undoubtedly perswaded, that he will heare my prayer.

Thus Dauid setteth forth vnto vs his owne example, and shew- eth what he himselfe was wont to doe. But to talke of these thinges and to teache them vnto others, as it is an easie matter, so by experience we finde and in ourselves we feele howe hard it is to performe the same in deede. For first these euills which the father of lyes styreth vpp, by wicked doctrine, the goodly can not beholde without great griefe and sorrowe. Besides this, they are without all hope of remedie, for that the rage of pestilent do- ctrine is moze horrible then the force and violence of fire and wa- ter which suddenly consumeth and destroyeth all thinges. The heart therefore is on eche side troubled and vexed, both with feare of the calamitie that shall followe, and also with the sense and fee- ling of the present euills. Nowe, if there be ioyned with all these thinges, an inward crosse and affliction, so that the heart doe also feele the displeasure of God, here it seemeth impossible for a man to pray. And doubtlesse a man vnexpert and vnkillfull in these matters, and presuming of the worde and his owne know- ledge, shall gayne nothing thereby but infinite troubles and vexa- tion. For, to teache, to repproue and to conuince, is not sufficient, but God withall must giue the increase, that not onely we with our brethren may be preserved in sound doctrine, but also such as

Inward tri-
bulation and
affliction of
the soule.

teach

teach the contrary may be rooted out and brought to nought. And this by prayer onely is obtained. But howe hard a thing this is, we haue already declared. To read the word, to heare the word, and to teach the word, are in deede excellent and beauenly works, which require the help and aide of the holy Ghost; but the inward practise of faith, so to conuert vnto the Lord, so to pray, so to praise, of Gods fauour that thy prayer shall please him, and that he will heere the same; that is a hard matter in deede. For fearefull consciences many tymes feele not this certainty and assurance in themselves, but are brought to such doubting and mistrust, that they can conceiue no hope of helpe or comfort, especially such as are touched with the remorse of conscience, guilt of sinne, and the feeling of their owne vniworthines. For in this case it oftentimes cometh to passe, that the minde beginneth first to doubt whether prayer will any thing auaille or no. They that are brought to this point can not pray, especially if they measure the same after the sense & feeling of their owne vniworthines. But here thou must not regard what thou art, but rather looke to the promise of God, the necessitie of prayer, the danger that followeth the neglecting thereof, and the thing it selfe for the which thou oughtest to pray. Setting these things befoze thine eyes, altho thine owne conscience and vniworthines call thee from prayer, yet shalt thou be constrained by prayer to flie to God for help and succour. For if a man, (for examples sake) haue committed theft, murder or some other notorious crime, and in flying away falleth into the water and so into danger of drowning, shall he not pray because his conscience accuseth him that he hath done wickedly? Nay, how much the more great and grieuous the sinne is, and the necessity of prayer more vrgent, so much the more earnestly ought the mind to be stirred vp and more ready to prayer.

The vse and
practise of
faith.

In like maner must we doe also in this temptation and danger of wicked doctrine. And whatsoeuer we be, we must rather consider great enuimities that Satan raketh vp by lying ministers, then whether we be worthy to be heard or no. To this doth the promise also allure vs. For we haue a promise in Christ that we shall be heard: yea and Christ him selfe also hath prescribed vnto vs the very words, syllables & letters which we should vse in prayer. We haue also a commandement to pray: so that it is not in our shooles to pray or not to pray, but it is a work commanded of God.

Howe the
minde of
men must be
stirred vp to
prayer.

A lilt.

Now, when we remember these things, and then consider on the one side how necessary a thing it is for vs to pray, and on the other side how great the danger is if we doe not pray; then are our mindes quickned and the temptation of conscience of our owne vnworthines is, as it were swallowed vp. Like as it hapneth also in

Tribulation
stirreth men
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sudden dangers: as when a man in his iorney falleth into the hands of theues or is in great perill of drowning, here, before he can once think of his own vnworthines, he durteth out into these wordes, or this cogitation: O God, be mercifull vnto me. And here the saying of the Physicians is found most true, that sharpe saluours prouoke the appetite. For there is no better scholemaster to teach vs to pray, then necessity. But whiles we walke in securitie and are not touched with any feeling of present dangers, no maruell is it if our prayer be either no prayer at all, or else in deede very saynt and cold. For mine owne part I can say by experience, that I neuer pray moze hartely then in the time of trouble and affliction. And this is that sharpe sawce which stirred up also in Dauid a hunger, as it were, and an appetite to pray, as he sayth: I called vnto the Lord in my trouble, &c.

Luther writeth that which he hath proued by experience.

We may learne therefore out of this verse that Dauid vsed this remedy against lying tongues, that first by doctrine he stirred vp him selfe and others, and then he prayed. In like maner ought we to do euē in respect of þ cause or necessity, which the Lords prayer also setteth forth vnto vs. For in þ the name of þ Lord is polluted, mens consciences peruerced, and the profession of the Gospel hindered, we haue in deede great cause to say: hallowed be thy name, that these abominations and blasphemies may haue an end: Thy kingdom come, which by the kingdom of Satan is in a manner oppressed. He that prayeth after this sort, shal fill heauen with his sighes and grones: whereas if we liue at ease and feele no trouble, our praier is so cold that scarcely our mouthes are filled therewith.

The necessity of prayer set forth vnto vs in the Lords prayer.

This cause and necessity of prayer Dauid expresseth when he sayth: I called vnto the Lord in my trouble, &c. For there must be some great necessity to constrain vs to pray, as our owne saluation, the saluation of our brethren, death eternal, our finnes, our troubles and afflictions, the glory of God, the kingdom of God, &c. all which are set forth in the Lords prayer, and if we consider them as we should doe, they will constrain vs to poure out true and hartty prayer vnto God with sighes and grones. Let vs confide

der

der well these thinges, and with our prayer let us burst through
the cloudes which hide from us the presence of our most grac-
ious God, and let us see that prayer is an acceptable sacrifice to
God, and such a service as be himselfe requirerh of vs. Whom
seeker meane helpe and trust to other mens prayers: which in
deede are not to be neglected, for the prayer of many hath a more
force and power. But thou also must praye: a member of the
Church, which with one voyce sayeth Our Father, &c. For he will
not be the father of this onely that man onely, but he will be also thy
father: althoughe thou dost thinke that thou art not worthy to be called
sonne.

Prayer is a
service of
God.
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land about
year of 1532

There is expressly added: vnto the Lord, contrary to that opi-
nion of which I was once my selfe, and many poore foules besides
in poverie at this day are. For thus I thought: I am a sinner, and
therefore I dare not praye: and God being angry with me for my
sinnes. It will therefore seeke such mediators as are in the fauour
of God, as Marie, Peter, Paule, &c. For timorous consciences
even at the hearing of the name of God are afraid. And in deede
great is the Majesty of God: but yet thou mayest not thinke it so
great, that therby thou shouldest be grieved from prayer. For if
thou consider his Majesty, why dost thou not consider it in this
respect, that he hath commaunded thee to praye? The authoritee of
the commaundment ought so to be regarded, that it should binde thee
to obey. Marke well this commaundment of God, and commend
thy selfe to his grace, and say: Lord, it is not in my choise to praye
or not so praye (as in monkerie used to maintaine): Thou hast com-
maunded me to praye. I do acknowledge therefore that I am bound
to obey thee. If I be unworthy, yet is thy commaundment and
thy will worthy to be obeyed: thy promise is worthy to be bele-
ued and trusted. Therefore I praye not in the unworthines of my selfe,
either else of Marie, Peter, Paule, &c. but in the worthinesse of
Iesus Christ, and of him who hath commaunded and charged me
to praye.

How poore
afflicted con-
sciences are
to be com-
forted which
dare not call
vnto y Lord.

Of this manner of prayer the whole papacie is ignoraunt. And
by myne owne experience this I dare affirme, that as in all the
tyme of my life that I ledde in monkerie. I neuer once sayd the
Lords prayer truly: so the Papistes at this day do not utter one
syllable thereof in faith. Yet peraduenture the Lord heard the un-
speakeable groanings of my heart, which I thinke many other al-
so had, although they were ignoraunt thereof. But where these

The prayers
of y Papistes.

up times we doe. Against this doubting Dauid's declaration
 confirme and strengthen vs with his conuiction; and hee
 the promises of God, which we haue; he saith he haeth his
 owne experience, to stirre vs up to call upon God in faith, where-
 by we may assure our consciences, that God will heare vs in that
 he is the hearer of the sighes and grones of all those that pray vnto
 him in faith. And if he heare not secretly, yet he will heare in
 his good time. If he heare thereto in such sort as thou wouldest
 and dost desire; he will heare thee in much better wise. So
 saith Bernard. And I doe not remember that euer I reade in
 any of the fathers of the latter age, a more goodly saying. Bie-
 chers, saith he, as concerning your prayer, haue no doubt, but
 assure your selves that as soone as the word shall be out of your
 mouth, your prayer is accepted and regarded in heauen by the
 presence and sight of God, and whether it shall be more that ye haue
 asked, or else is expedient not to be done. All that can be more
 Christlike spoken? What greater consolation can there be then
 that God, as a most gracious, rich, and bountifull Father,
 should be gone wth other supplicacions, wth his supplicacions and pray-
 ers made vnto him, but say, that in to say he is done as ye haue
 desired.

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The saying
 of Bernard.

But ye will say, that this commeth oftentimes vberwise to
 passe. For notwithstanding the prayers that be made for women
 with child, and in crumell, yet many pple in their travell. Did not
 Jacob (thinke ye) pray for his wife, Rachel in that extremity? Da-
 uid also in like maner, prayed with great seruencie of spirit for
 his soune begotten of Bathaba, but it was in vaine. Hence such ex-
 amples we see also daily amongst the Saints of God, I answer,
 that howsoever it be, we must vndoubtedly beleue that God is the
 hearer of prayers. This like we may reueit take from him. And
 in this faith yong children doe effectually pray; which doe beleue
 that God heareth them and giueth them all things. This saith
 children haue with full assurance, and without any doubting, and
 therefore their prayer I both greatly commend, and also do often-
 times see the same before me as an example to follow. For albeit
 that children doe learne the forme of prayer & words of vs, yet the
 efficacy & powen therof we may wel learne of them, because of our
 peruerse & corrupt nature, & also our euil education. First therfore
 we must beleue & not doubt that our prayer is heard. Secondly this

God giueth
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lacke therof.

Howe God
heareth our
prayers.

heareth our prayers, not that God heareth alway that which we pray for, but that which is profitable for vs. For God, in his infinite goodness, can geue nothing but that which is good. But we many times desire that thing which is not good in deede, but seemeth so vnto vs. In such cases God euen then heareth our prayer, when he granteth not that which we desire. In that prayer therefore which the Lord hath taught vs, first we pray for the sanctifying of his name; for the coming of his kingdom, & that his will may be done; before we pray for the things which do pertaine to the life and commoditie of this life: so that in such things we desire that the Lord would do, not that seemeth good vnto vs, but that which is good in deede. The difference therfore in asking those things which we pray for, is here rightly set forth: & when in those things which pertaine to the glory of God & our saluarity, we must desire our prayers to be heard with our conditum. But in those things which pertaine to this life, altho we must hope that the Lord will graunt our petitions, yet must we pray with resolution, resigning our wills to the Lords will, to do therein as seemeth good vnto him & profitable for vs. If he knoweth what is good for vs, but we do not, as Paul saith. What must we yet aske this title to our most faithfull & gracious God, that he is our Father, a hearer of prayers; as David here speaketh of him.

Verse 2. Deliuer my soule, o Lord, from lying lippes and from a deceitfull tongue.

This verse sheweth the matter of argument wherof David entreateth in this psalme. He prayeth for the prosperous successe of the holy word of God and pure doctrine, against false and hereticall tongues. I sayd in the beginning, that this psalme must not only be taken as an exple for vs to follow, of a doctrine to teach vs what David did in this dangerous case; of what we ought to doe in the like: but also is set forth to comfort and confirme vs against this great offence and stumbling block, that wheresoever the Gospell beginneth to shine, there Satan stirreth up theues and robbers, enemies of true doctrine to hinder the course thereof: and therefore when we see that the Anabaptistes and other Sectaries spring vpp at the preaching of the Gospell, we should not thinke it strange, but rather it should be to vs a meanes to stirre

stirre vs by, thereby the more diligently to watch and shake of all securitie, forasmuch as we see that he which tempteth vs sleepeth not, and to fight against spirituall wickednes; against the which the children of God haue bene alwayes at continuall warre. Abel was persecuted of Cain, Isaac of Ismael, Iacob of Esau. Of this enmitie Satan is the authoꝝ, which alwayes persecuteth God and his trueth, not onely with slaughter, but also with lying and falshood. To knowe these thinges it is a singular consolation in such dangerous cases, that we be not discouraged oꝝ dismayed, but may be strengthened and confirmed thereby: and moreover it keepeth vs from securitie, which lying tongues and deceitfull lippes will not lightly suffer a man to fall into. We must be ready therfore, not onely with the word of God, but also and especially with prayer, to fight against false doctrine and deceitful tongues, considering, as Dauid here sayeth, that the Lord is our deliuerer, who only in this danger can deliuer vs and destroy our aduersaries. For the continuall exercise of the word and prayer must goe together.

Deliver my soule: that is, deliuer me. It is a phrase and kinde of speech proper to the Hebrewes.

VVhat doth thy deceitfull tongue bring vnto thee, or what doth it auail thee?

It is as the sharpe arrow of a mightie man and as the goales of Iuniper.

In demaunding this question he goeth about to stirre vpe him selfe, and to finde occasion to accuse the deceitfull tongue: as he doth in deede most liuely sette forth by two notable similitudes what a pestilent thing wicked doctrine is, and what the godly and such as are spirituall doe iudge thereof. First he compareth it to an arrowe that is not blunt, but sharpe: and moreover which is cast, not of him that is weake and feeble, but that is stronge and mightie: so that there is danger on both sides, as well of the arrowe that is sharpe and able to pearce, as also of him which with graue violence hurleth the same. The Deuill therefore the father of all heresies is here plainly sette forth vnto vs as an aduersarie and souldier, strong and mightie: who from the

Wicked doctrine.

A liuely picture of the Deuill.

beginning hath made warre against the Church of God; and albeit he hath bene often overcome, yet will he neuer geue ouer, but returneth more feare and subtil then before; and the better armed, the more holy and learned they be against whom he fighteth, so much the more strongly & fearfully he setteth upon them. Therefore the holy Ghost here speaketh according to the sense of man, that is, according to the cogitations which the gospil haue in this dangerous case; and he calleth a pestilent teacher an arrowe of dart in the hande of the strong and mighty. For if ye beholde the multitude of the aduersaries, their stoures, proud bygges, obstinacie, and fearcenes, with the subtil & deceitfull sleights whereby they auoyd or wickedly peruert all thinges that make against them, be they neuer so gospil spoken; it seemeth no other wise but that they will utterly oppresse and destroy the Church, which appeareth to be in comparison of them, but a small number, and that also very weake and feeble. It seemeth therefore that Satan, as a dart which no armour is able to resist, must needs ppenale and haue the victory. But if you looke to the end, you shall see the contrary. As the Church when she compareth the multitude of her enemies with her poore litle focke, though her infirmity is troubled and feareth destruction: euen so when Satan seeth his practises at the first to procede as he would, he is puffd vp and swelleth at the successe therof. For wicked doctrine creepeth like a canker, and mightely encreaseeth every hower: so that if a teacher of erroneous and hereticall doctrine should be suffered in a reformed congregation, he would soone ouerthrow altogether: so violently percerth this dart. And why? because it is hurled of Satan: and the common people are, as it were the framehouse of Satan, because they loth and despise that which is dayly taught them.

The common people are the framehouse or workhouse of the denill.
Deut. 29.

Now, because the heretikes doe not vse the accustomed and ordinary maner of teaching, but feede the people with new & strange thinges, therefore (as Moyses saith) the drunken shall be met together, and these arrowes perse through with greater violence.

Forouer it is a figure vsed in the Scriptures to call the word of God arrowes or darts, as it appeareth Psal. 45. Thy arrowes are very sharpe, &c. And in our language by a proverbiall speech, when a man vseth the wordes, the counsell, and iudgement of others, and not his owne, we say they be arrowes out of an other mans

Appl. A
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Deut. 31

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mans quier. But properly this name doth agree to false doctrine, which (as I sayd) perceib swiftly.

The other similitude likewise hath a notable signification of power and swiftness. By coles he meaneth here a hot burning fire and consuming flame: As also he doth in the 17. Psalm. He vseth the similitude of Juniper, because that tree, besides the thicknes of the leaues, hath a great sarnes withal, & therfore is lightly set on fire & burneth vehemently. The sence and meaning hereof is, that heresie and false doctrine which is full of strong delusion, hath a power to peruert and seduce men with no lesse celerity and swiftness, then fire hath to burne being kindled in a forest of Juniper. Likewise the Scripture in another place speaketh of a great fire, like to the flame of thornes vnder a porte, meaning such a fire as is suddenly kindled and swiftly encreaseth.

Coles.

Juniper.

The fire of
the heretikes
is more swift
then the fire
of the holy
Ghoſt.

This description therfore is, as it were a complaine, that the popsoned tongues of heretikes doe so suddenly preuaile, and with such successe, worke mischief in the Church of God: as it came to passe after the preaching of S. Paule. For when he, with exceeding travels had happily planted many Churches, as soone as he had once turned his back, all Asia was peruerted and turned from the Gospell. This is the calamitie of all ages, that whosoener goodly preachers haue builded with great travells, the teachers of wicked doctrine doe suddenly overthrowe. Let vs therfore be thankfull vnto God for that litle poore remnant, which as yet by his speciall grace remaineth in the sound doctrine of the Gospell: and moreouer for this his gift, that we are able to iudge such doctrines to be the vartes of Satan although they be neuer so glorious and agree neuer so much with the wisdom and righteousness of the flesh: and further, that they are like to a vehement fire, euen suche as is the flame of Juniper which we must labour to quench with all our power. These be the spirituall battells which the world knoweth not, farre passing all carnall conflicts: for in those conflicts like are matched with like, that is to say, men with men, but in these we fight not onely against the greater number, mightily armed with malice and power, but also against Satan him selfe, and against spirituall wickednes. Therfore in this warfare we haue needs of the helpe of the Lord and of the Angell Michael, as it is in the Apocalyps. And for this cause the prayers and sighes of the goodly in such a dangerous case are necessarie,

saying on this wise: O Lord, behold, we will gladly teach and set forth thy word, but what are we except thou helpe vs? Stand for vs therefore against the enemies of thy truth, & defend thine owne cause. This hope we haue in such great successe of wicked doctrine, that that which is not of thy planting shall not endure, and that which suddenly springeth vpp, shall suddenly be cut downe. There hath bene hitherto no heresse which hath not bene confounded, and the word of God hath had alwayes the victorie. Cain, Ismael, Arius, Manichee and such other haue perished for resisting the Gospell. The Papacie also is now falling, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever, according to that sentence of the psalme: They haue fought against me euē from my youth, but they could neuer preuaile.

Luther prophecieth.

But here perhaps you will aske what were these heresses and deceitful tongues in the time of Dauid, against the which he prayeth in this place. In his kingdom there was Achitophel, Semei, and many others, which spake cursedly of him, & with crafty counsel & conspiracy stirred by the hearts of his subiects against him.

But it appeareth that Dauid speaketh here of some great danger. What is that you will say? Albeit the holy histories do sufficiently declare what trouble the true prophets of God alwayes had with false and lying teachers, as the story of Jeremy doth declare, yet Dauid him selfe expretheth in diuers places of the psalmes, what was the cause of these his conflicts, as in the fifty psalme it both appeare, in the which he speaketh of the merite and deserving which the unbelienting Jewes did trust vnto because of their sacrifices. For as it is now, so hath it bene in all ages, that many haue thought them selues righteous through their workes. And this opinion did maruelously increase and multiply the Jewish sacrifices: for they thought that by their sacrifices their sinnes were forgiven though their hartes were unpure & without faith: Even like to our aduersaries the papistes, which doe therefore so highly extoll and so mightely maintaine and defend their sacrifices in the Masse, because, (as they say) of it self by the work wrought it is available for the remission of sinnes. Against this heresse Dauid fought, and taught that to offer vpp a bullocke it was no great seruice vnto God, seeing he was both the creator and giuer of the same, and being the Lord of all, hath neede of nothing, much lesse of a bullocke, and therefore they that shall offer a right sacrifice

see

see in deede, must acknowledge their sinnes, and also the great goodnes of the Lord, promising vnto them a blessing by the blessed seede, and giue him thanks for the same: imoate, praise and magnifie his name, &c. Thus Dauid confuteth this heresie in that place.

But there were many other moe like vnto this. For the Jewes were not onely fallen to the worshipping of the gods of the Gentiles (as it is to be seene in Jeremy) but forsaking the temple, they resorted to those places wherein their forefathers were wont to offer sacrifice, whereas the Lord had appoynted the Tabernacle in Ierusalem for a place of sacrifice and prayer. Some, of their owne payne, did choose vnto them selues groues and hills wherem they offered their sacrifice. Because these thinges were contrary to the will and worde of God, and done of the Idolaters with great greedynesse: it was necessarie that the people shoulde be warned and taught of the Prophetes of God, not to choose to them selues any other way of seruing and worshipping God, or to seeke any other righteousness then that which shoulde come by the blood of the sonne of God: whom S. Paule calleth the Lamb, because he shoulde be the sacrifice that shoulde take away the sinnes of the world. Thus we see that there hath alwaies bene some like matter like conflicts betwene the true Church and the false, and also like daungers haue thereupon ensued. Wherefore we must vse like remedies also: that is, first by sound doctrine to defend the glory of Christ, & exhort men to the study & loue of the worde: word

Secondly by prayer to fight against wicked conuies and lying hyppocrites. Now the Prophet after his prayer addeth a complaint.

Verse. 5. VVoe is me that I remaine in Meslech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar.

Whitherto the Prophet hath declared the daungers both of him selfe and of the church; with prayer to be deliuered from the same. Now he addeth herunto a complaint, for that the Church of God being in the midst of her enemies, is continually vexed on euery side; and true doctrine assailed with power & subtiltie. As though he shoulde say: Being in this distresse and daunger, which is all that is any way to doe: such fully to reach, feruently to pray, and patiently to suffer. To this end I write, that the word may be published.

likely misinterpreted and kept: I pray, that the word may preuaile and haue the victorie: and till it shall overcome, I must patiently abide what trouble or affliction sooner shall happen. He that will not thus doe, is but a shrinker and his fall will be fearful.

In like maner haue we bene troubled in these our dayes with Epicures, Libertines, Anabaptistes, &c. We haue sustained the cruel oppression of the word by the power and subtlety of the Papists that cursed seede of Cain, & amongst vs there is also no small number which fearing neither God nor deuill; doe not onely condemne ministry, but would wish it to be bitterly abolished. These are heauy crosses to the godly, when they must be compelled both to see them and suffer them, and yet can finde no remedie for the same. This forceth vs to say with Dauid: VVoe is me that I remayne in Mesech, &c.

By Mesech and Kedar he meaneth two sortz of people inhabiting neare vnto the Iewes: of which the first came of Iapheth as Moyses teacheth, and the seconde of Imael. Both of them were barbarous, cruel and without all humanity, dwelling in tents. By these he meaneth such as were of his owne nation, being no lesse cruell and spitefull against Gods people then these were: like as in another place the corrupted & degenerate Iewes he calleth Scitiles. And that he might the more sharply reprehend Gods enemies and his, of purpose he nameth those people which the Iewes knew to be most cruel and barbarous, meaning that if he dwelt in Mesech & Kedar, he could not be amongst more cruel enemies. As if he should say: I am compelled to comfort my self with hope and patience, and would be glad if the churches were in peace & quietnes, and if pastors and rulers thereof in a godly vnicity, but this will not be. Therefore I will commit the whole cause to God by prayer, & teach the word faithfully. In the meane season we must beare these offences, that by the good we may overcome the euill. Thus we see that the office of teaching is a miserable kind of life: For besides ohercalamities which the preachers & teachers of Gods word must suffer at the hands of the unfaithful, this also must needs be vnto them a great crosse, to see the word of God and true doctrine miserably corrupted, and the Church disquieted by false brethren. But for the Lorders cause these things we suffer, and we say with Dauid: VVoe is me that I remayne in Mesech; and dwell in the tents of Kedar, barbarous and cruell people.

My

Vers. 6. My soule hath too long dwelt with him that hateth
peace.

Here he sheweth plainly whom he meaneth by Mesech & Kedar: to wit, those wicked Israelites, which forsaking the wayes of their godly fathers, became spitefull and cruell against the faithfull: amongst whom he was compelled to dwell a long season and to suffer great injuries and cruelty at their hands. And this is the subtiltie of the malignant spirit, that whom he can not overcome by the multitude and greenousnes of tentations, those he goeth about to weere with tediousnes & long continuance thereof. Wherefore many being but littell of this spiritual warfare, fight valiantly at the beginning, but in the ende they faint and cowardly give over. This danger David did foresee & complained thereof. Long have I dwelt (sayth he) amongst those that hate peace, that is, which continually trouble & disquiete the church of God, and neuer will be at peace with it, thinking by impotencie and long continuance at the length to get the victory. So Iob with one kind of calamity was not discouraged, but when one messenger followed another, and one calamitie likewise came upon another, then his minde by little and little began to be troubled. And this is the malignity and malice of Satan. Wherefore let vs cast away all hope of peace so long as we live here, and let vs assure our selues, that if this day we overcome one kind of temptation, to morrowe Satan will set upon vs againe to take an other.

Kedar and
Mesech signifye the
enemies of
the church

And here behold the craft and subtilety of the worlde. The holy Ghost calleth them heretikes which are haters of peace and concord, and this name they spitefully apply vnto vs. Thou (say they) art he that troublest Israel. Thus they which trouble the Church in deede, accuse the true Church and call them selues the louers of peace and concord. This must we all suffer, and so content our selues with the testimony of a good conscience which shall cleare vs before God, that we seeke the peace of the church, whereunto they are bitter enemies, as followeth.

Vers. 7. I seeke peace, & when I speake thereof, they are bent
to warre.

This is the testimony of impotencie that I loue peace and seeke after it. Whereof then commeth all this trouble? all this dead

by warts? of me, I graunt, but not by my default. For if I would suffer these disturbers and haters of all godly peace and concord, to say and to doe what they list, then would they not so rage, then would they not seeke my hurt as they doe, then would they lue in peace. But how can we hide those thinges that we haue scene, that we haue heard, & that we are commaunded to speake and declare, not in our chamber as diuon the house toppes? For Christ saith: Go and preach the Gospel to all creatures. And againe: No man hideth a light vnder a bushel. This is the cause that the word is in our mouth as a burning cole, which can not be kept in, but compelleth vs to open our mouthes. Hereof then come all these troubles, because they take away the continuement of God, & yet would haue vs to holde our peace. And here we see it come to passe that Christ saith in the Gospel: when a strong man keepeth the house all thinges are in peace, but when a stronger then he cometh, then troubles arise.

Leke. 11.

This is then our consolation, that what troubles soeuer doe arise, we rest vpon the testimony of our owne conscience that we do nothing else but speake and declare that we are commaunded. It is not our life therby which they accuse, but our doctrine ab which the blame: which is not ours but Christes. Wherefore let vs not only condemne all peace and concord, but let heauen and earth also perishe, rather then the doctrine of Christ or his glory of his kingdom should be diminished by blisphemy in any point. The danger whereof they see not vnder this regard, which make so great a matter of the losse of that peace and tranquillity, which hath bene and yet is scene in the kingdom of Antichrist. Nor withstanding let vs with all our power attyplice and let forth the glorie of our God and the frutes that come of the true preaching of the gospel, and let vs contemne all such slanders, which these Epicures do most maliciously and spitefully heap vpon vs, commending nothing else but that peace & tranquillity wherewith the deuill hath rocked them a slepe in all damnable security: wherby we see what horrible impietie reigneth in the papacie. There is not one word purely caught concerning sinne, grace, the merite of Christ, faith, the effectuall of woorkes, concerning magistrates, and other degrees and kindes of life. All thinges are miserably corrupted with perillous glosses and expositions: For neuer, what prophagation and selling of Passes was there? what deceit and robbery by

by pardons, purgatorie, with such other abominations devised on-
ly for bauntage and gaine. When I looke into the hingsome of
the Pope as it was before we preached the Gospell, it seemeth to
me that of verie purpose men were cast vnto Satan and eternall
damnation by false teachers and ministers of iniquitie.

Now consider whether it were not better with trouble to kepe
and enioy the word of God, then with losse of the word, to liue in
peace and tranquillity, though it were neuer so heartily a peace.
As for me I woulde not desire to liue in paradise without the word;
and with the word to liue in hell it is an easie matter, like as in
this world we liue as it were in hell, and comfort our selues only
with hope which the word of God sheweth vnto vs, and with this
hope we overcome all kindes of troubles & crosses. Let vs there-
fore lay sure holde on this consolation which the holy Ghost here
setteyth forth vnto vs: whereof also all they haue great neede, that
teach the word of trueth, namely that they are not the cause of of-
fence, trouble and sedition. There must needs be offences: there
must needs be Lucians, Epicures, contemners and scornors of
religion, troublers of the peace and quietnes of the Church, but
blessed are they which are not the cause of these euills, but are prea-
chers of peace, and seeke by all godly meanes, peace and christian
vnitie. In the number of whom, by Gods spectall grace we are at
this day, howe soeuer the world thinketh of vs, and we will pray
vnto God that for Christes sake, he will so keepe vs euen to the
uttermost breath.

Thus are the enemies of God and his word paynted out by
Dauid in this Psalm, and also the true state of the Church, tea-
ching vs thereby that we shoulde arme our selues against these
daungers, and giue thanks vnto God for this great consolation,
that whatsoeuer tumults and troubles arise in the Church, he
doth not impute the same vnto them that teach the word, but vnto
the word it selfe, which is not ours but Christes, whereby we
may comfort our selues whatsoeuer followeth of the true prea-
ching of the Gospell. Let them stoppe their mouthes and kepe si-
lence that so greatly commend peace: but we will speake and shew
forth the wonderous workes of the Lord with boldnes, and will
not be disobediēt in our vocation. If euil tongues be walking and
troubles arise, we will with Dauid fight against them by prayer,
commending to God the cause of his poore Church, wherein he

hath opposed to keep & maintain his way; why also shall turne
 & confounde all wicked tongues with þe same fire of his deuyllish
 nation; wherby they shalke the church of God halbe destroyed.

Hebrews and more. And thus you may say any thing to such an
 allusion to *The 12. Psalm* as at this yd. nonis. 15.

32. 1. I will lift mine eyes vnto the mountaynes, &c. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

The argu-
 ment of the
 Psalmc.

This Psalmc
 containeth
 the doctrine
 of faith.

3. *The Psalmc* going before was a prayer for the preservation
 and continuance of the word of God & sound doctrine, against pe-
 ricious tongues and wicked opinions: For that is the chiefest
 assault that Satan maketh against the church of God. Now this
 Psalmc I take to be as an exhortation to the faithful, for it con-
 taineth the doctrine of faith. Which faith is a knowledge of things
 invisible and so be looked for, and resteth in the promise & word of
 God. But because Gods word exceedeth the capacity of man, & the
 things which it promisseth seeme either absurd & unlikely, or im-
 possible or else incredible & against all reason, therefore they which
 haue once begun to beleue, haue neede of continual exhortations, to
 stirre them vp against pretensions of the flesh, which strine against
 faith & the word of God, least the spirit being pressed downe with
 the heauy burden of the flesh, should be utterly unable to thinke of
 spiritual and heavenly things. For our life is full of troubles, tol-
 sed with continual tempests, as they which are sayling on the sea;
 and we are caried away euery moment with the blasts of tenta-
 tions, whiles our mindes are assailed either with prosperitie or ad-
 uersity, with wealth or pouerty, with glory or ignominy, with joy
 or sorrow. And hereof yet doe follow much more greuous & daun-
 gerous temtations: that is to say, security and desperation. There-
 fore when these stormes blowe, it is necessarie that we shoulde be
 stirred vp with continuall exhortations out of the word of God,
 whereby we may learne to resist the same. And thus doe I vnder-
 stand this Psalmc; that it is a doctrine whereby we are admon-
 shed & taught that we shoulde haue our faith exercised and stirred
 vp with continuall exhortations so long as we liue, least we being
 ouertome with the cares of this world, shoulde forget and neglect
 the rich blessings and everlasting treasures of the life to come.

Verse 1. I will lift mine eyes vnto the mountaynes from whence
 my helpe cometh.

These

These words do include a comparison between the mountaine
which bring helpe and succour, & the mountaine which bring de-
struction and destruction: as the prophet saith of such a mountaine
in psalme 131. the contrarie, if you have respect to the Lord, the
godly have a promise of Christ that he will be their helpe and suc-
cour: but if we looke to the outward appearance, Christ himselfe
hanging vpon the crosse, seemeth to be better forsaken. In like
manner there is a comparison together of contraries in the prophet
stande throughout this whole psalme: As though the prophet
should say: when tedious troubles of faith are in hand, one run-
neth to this place, and another to that, seeking for helpe & succour
divers wayes: As amongst my people some runne to Bethel, some
to Gilgal, some to Becher, as mountaine from whence a shep-
herd doth helpe, and succour: As there is no proper way to suc-
cour, helpe, and succour, as to these such partones and helpers, with
kneeling, knocking, creping, hilling and licking. For the helpe
and comforts are infinite which the heart beleueth and seeketh af-
ter when it is in trouble and distress. And it is a wonderfull thing
to see howe ready it is to receiue helpe and comfort by any way
finding any of them. This is then the smile and commendation
affair, that is lookech onely towards the healthfull and comfort-
table mountaine which is in Ierusalem: & refresheth the succour of
all other mountaines. Thus the prophet setteth his eyes alone (as
it were) vpon the Turkish, who forsaking the helpe of the Lordes
mercy and goodness which was then in Ierusalem sought helpe
and succour in other mountaines. As the prophet saith in psalme 137.
In like manner in the kingdom of the Romish Antichrist there
are infinite sects and swarms of monks and other superstitious
botaries, some holding of Augustine, some of Benedict, some of
Francise, &c. which by their houses and monasticall life thinke to
obtaine the kingdom of heauen, hoping also by these wayes to
ouercome the terror of Gods wrath & deale the punishment of con-
science. And this is alwayes the inclination of mans nature to fol-
low his owne wayes and to forsake the wayes of the Lord. Ther-
fore David saith: Some forsake the temple & abhorre the mount
Syon, but I abide in the simple way of faith & true religion, which
is the healthfull hill that the Lord hath himselfe layd out. For
that he collecteth the healthfull hill, the hill from whence helpe
and succour cometh, he reiecteth and condemneth all other hills.

A comparing
of contraries

on yndol
has dore
dore dore
dore dore

The com-
mendations
of faith

on yndol
has dore
dore dore

B. iiii.

which haue the we of helpe and succour. Such I meane as is vi-
sibly employed in the seruice and honour done to the looke but true
helpe they giue none. So the Hierarchie that Baill shewes more
pleasent helpe in the temple than God. So they cry in lereamy: VVe
will doe sacrifice to the Queene of heauen: but thy commaun-
dement we will not doe: for since we left to doe sacrifice to the
Queene of heauen y the sworde and famine hath consumed vs:
And thus forsaking the temple and the true worship of God, they
reduce he adonely to all impietie.

But you will say, Why would God that Idolatry should have
such success? Then to reply our sayre, and whether we doe truely
believe and worship one God, according to that commandment:
Thou shalt have none other Gods, &c. Thus it is in deede that
Idolatry hath great success, yet it is but for a time. So God King
Achaz: The goddesses of the Kings of the Syrians doe helpe them:
therefore will I also seeke their favour, (and they shall helpe me).
But what sayth the Scripture? The gods of Syria were the de-
struction both of them and of all Israel. And this is the end of all
rich fallowen.

O woe Mammón like wife helpe his woorthippers: f or he is
a great god, and bringeth to them libertie: ioy and comfort. He
lifteth them vp to wealth and dignitie: he maketh them to steele
with pride and glory. But howe long? f or the time of this frail
ty-buckle life: but in deathe he doth not onely forsake them, but by-
neth them downe to the depe pit of hell. Therefore whatsoeuer
wozldly and vnsible comforts and delighthes the heart of man can
desire or enjoy, he knoweth them vncertaine and wozyll must
forsake them, and yet withall they bring vnspokeable toymences
and afflictions of minde, and lead men into such blindness that they
haue no regard of God at all: who doth not delight his true wo-
thippers with vayne pleasures of this wozyld which endure but a
moment, but replenisheth them with euilllasting trespase: f or thus
he sayth: I will see you againe, and your heart shall reioyce, and
your ioy no man shall take from you. Let vs learne therefore
to cleaue fast to the Lord our God, and those inuisible comforts: and
if trouble come (as we can notooke to be without a crosse) if we
seeme to be desolate and destitute of all comfort, yet God hath a
time when he will shew him selfe to haue a care of vs, and we shall
vnderstand that the afflictions of this life are not so be compared to the
glory

gloze which shall be rewarded on us, as S. Paule comforteth vs.

This is then the frist and meaning of this verse, that sapch is a knowledge of thinges inuisible, and yet to be looked for, least we should thinke it to be but a inere speculation, as some doe make it. There are thinges to be looked for of the which we haue experience in this life, that is to say, a good conscience, a ioyfull heart, an inuincible faith, which is able to stande against all stormes of tentations, against pueritie, enuy, bepphche and scitander of the world, against errours and false doctrine, and euen against death it selfe. Thus we must learne to know the nature of faith, namely that it is a will of knowledge of an expectation resting vpon the word of God, which word sheweth and setteth forth vnto vs inuisible helpe, and yet to be looked for, as certaine and vsfallible; and although we thinke it long before they come, yet will they come, when it shall be most to our loy & comfort. And this is it that these words of the Prophet doe here expresse: I liue vp mine eyes to the hills from whence my helpe commeth. Here he sheweth him selfe to be destitute of helpe and succour, and yet in sure hope and expectation thereof, he looketh vp vnto those hills and hopeth for inuisible comfort.

In like manner must we doe also. I am in distresse of affliction of body of mind: I am in necessity and can see no meanes how to liue, how to maintayne my family, how to escape this daunger of that. Here is the hart oftentimes oppressed with sorrow, and miserably vexed; as though there were no succour, no comfort, nor reimey to be founde. But here must we be certainly perswaded that there is helpe and succour prepared for vs, and the time thereof also appointed of God, although we know not when it shall be. But by this we may learne what a hard matter it is to beleue when the hart must yeld and consent to any thing contrary to that which both we se, heare, & feele. I my self haue bene oftentimes in wonderfull great daungers, when the whole world (as it were) conspired against me. For the Pope my mostall enemy and the enemy of my Christ, did not cease to stirre vp against me, what power and terror so euer he was able to deuise. Here reason woulde rather perswade me to kepe silence and say nothing, then to teach and bying my selfe thereby into trouble and daunger. For reason can neuer see the Lordes maruelous helpe and deliuerance, which is inuisible and hidden from the eyes of the world; therefore it thin-

The help of the Lord.

kech onely of that which it seeth, that is to say, destruction. In all these stormes, being my mind was stablished in God, what my faith and hope was, I will here say nothing. Albeit in these great dangers, (I graunt) my minde was oftentimes troubled, and yet at the length the invisible help of God, being hidden from myne eyes, and from the eyes of the whole worlde, appeared: so that not onely my deadly and mightie aduersaries could not haue their wills vppon me, but also the preaching of the Gospell had more prosperous success, and more mightely increased then euer it did before. Therefore, forasmuch as flesh can not see the invisible things of God, teach us so humble our selues into the obedience of faith, that we may learne to say: I lift myne eyes vnto the hills. There is sure helpe prepared, though I can by no meanes see as yet where the same, and flesh seeth also looketh for the contrary, so that these wordes expressly and kinde set forth the nature and strength of faith, and what it is.

Why he
sayth to the
hills, and not
to the Lord.

But why sayth he, I lift myne eyes to the hills, and not to God? And againe, why both he mention mine hillies then one? For that serueth to mainteine Idolatrie. For the first I answer that this and such like places: as, he send thee his helpe from the holy place, do teach us, that God will be heard, worshipped, looked for, and prayed vnto according to his word, and not according to our imaginations. So sayth he in Exodus: In what place soeuer I shall deane a remembrance of my name, there will I visit thee, and bless thee. Therefore the Iewes were alwayes homme to the temple of Ierusalem, in what place soeuer they were, and also when they prayed at home in their owne houses, to turne their eyes toward Syon. The prayer of the godly pleased God euen in Babylon, farre from the temple and from Ierusalem: but yet in this respect, because they sung and prayed to that God which dwelled in the hill Syon, and there had erected his tabernacle.

And this is the cause why the Prophetes condemned all other kindes of seruite and worship done vnto God in other places. For it was not enough to say: O God which dost heare thy people out of Egypt: For so Ieroboam also spake vnto God, and sayd truely of him, and perhaps prayed more earnestly then they that were in Ierusalem, and in the temple. Such a sayre shew and pretence of true holines hypocritie is wont to make: and Idolatrie is oftentimes

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times more earnest & cheerefull than our plecte. But why do we
such prayers please. God? For soch because other hills were not
chosen & appointed of God to that purpose, neither had they the
word and promise of God. Wherefore God would not heare their
prayers but only in that place, or at least, turning the felues both
with eyes and heart towards Ierusalem, if with their bodies they
could not be present. Daniel therefore being in Babilon, when he
was about to make his prayer vnto God, turned himself towards
Ierusalem, not only because Salomon in his prayer vnto God be-
sought him that if they at any time should be driuen out of their
countrey, & turning them felues towards this place should make
their prayer vnto him, he would heare them and bring them home
again: but also because God will be worshipping in y place which
he hath chosen, that all wandring deuotions and worshipping of
God after mans imaginations, might be auoyded.

¶ We which are in the time of the new testament, are not bound
to any external place, as Christ sayth: The time shall come when
they shall worshippinge me neyther in this mountayne nor in that.
Christ is our spirituall Sanctuarie: for God will heare no man Our moun-
taine.
but through him onely, according to the saying of Christ: VVhat
soeuer ye aske my Father in my name, &c. By him therefore we
offer vnto God the bullockes of our lippes: for without Christ
we can neither beleue, trust, nor obtayne any thing. This is the
prin Cipall poynt of all our doctrine; and therefore we must lay
sure hold on it. There haue bene many which haue gone about to
please God without Christ. So Arius, albeit he robbed Christ of
his diuinity, yet he would seeme to acknowledge a God whom he
professed and worshipped. Monks and other religious Sectaries
thinke to please God with their will works, bowes, & monastical
life: yea & in the whole kingdom of the Romish Idoll, what other
meanes do they seke to please god withall? yea what other Christ
do they make vnto them felues then their own works, imitations,
and traditions? All these lift vp their eyes, not to the hills, to the
which David looked, that is; they do not looke only vnto Christ: for
he alone is that hill & holy Sanctuarie which we must lift vp our
eyes vnto, that like as the Iewes had no Sanctuarie but that in
Ierusalem: so we should haue no other Sanctuarie to flie vnto but
this one and alone, even Iesus Christ the sonne of Mary.

¶ Thus am I wont to answer to the first doubt, that David

fastned his eyes vpon the holy place & thither directed his prayer; which place was in Ierusalem, in the which was the memoꝛiall of the name of God which he had made vnto him selfe. Before that time it was in Siloe & Gibeā where the Tabernacle was. In these places he heard the prayers of his people, and he receaued their sacrifices: but in other places he neither receaued prayers nor sacrifices: for there was not the memoꝛiall of the name of the Lord which he had made to him selfe, but the memoꝛiall of Idolls and Idolatry, which the impious Iewes had imagined to themselves. But nowe in the newe Testament the name of God dwelleth in Christ and his Church, which is one body with Christ, whereas is the word of God, baptisme, the supper of the Lord, and the exercise of obedience towards God.

To the second doubt thus I aunswere, that albeit he seemeth to prophesy of the church of the new Testament, in the which are many hills, that is to say, God in Christ heareth the prayers of the faithfull in euery place, neither is prayer and the worship of God bound to any externall place, yet may it be that the Prophet therefore spake in the plural number, because there were two hills in Ierusalem, namely mount Sion, and the mount called Moria, where the temple was. And moreover (as I sayd before) the plural number sheweth a contrariety betwixt those hills and the hills of the Idolaters. As if he should say: The Idolaters run to their mountaines, but I will abide still in these hills, wherein my soule delighteth above all other.

Moreover, where he saith: I lift vp mine eyes vnto the mountaynes from whence my helpe commeth: it is the voyce of faith. For the flesh thinketh the crosse and all calamities to come from these hills, and therefore calleth them not the hills from whence commeth helpe and comfort, but desolation and destruction, when it seeth it selfe in haerap with the world for religion, in pouertie, in tentations, in daungers, in terrours. This seemeth to be a desolation and a casting away from the face of God and a descending into hell. Against this iudgement of the flesh the sighteth faith, and iudgeth not according to that which it seeth and feareth, but according to the word which the Lord hath spoken: which bideth vs lift vp our eyes to invisible comfortes, and to become (as it were) invisible, and by faith, in pouertie to beholde riches, in heauines and sorrowe to find comfort, in desolation and destruction helpe and

and succour, and when we seeme to be cut of and to be cast away from God, euen then to beleue and by faith to lay sure handfast on Gods eternall mercie and grace in Christ: As Dauid here did, who was afflicted and felt no comfort, and yet he sayth: I lift vp myne eyes to the hilles from whence commeth my helpe. Thou must lift vp thine eyes therfore, and in no wise fixe them vpon the present troubles, calamities, or afflictions whatsoever the flesh seeth, feeleth, or suffereth: for that is to obey and consent to the eyes and the eares, that is to say, to harken to the flesh, which is alwaies ready to perswade thee that God is angry with thee, that he hath forsaken thee, that thy daunger is such and so terrible that thou canst neuer escape it. Were therefore thou must lift vp thine eyes to the hills of the Lord, and harken to the voice of God, who sayth and promisseth that helpe shall surely come from those hills: which albeit for the tyme it be inuisible and can neither be seene nor felt, yet is it most certayne and infallible. They that are in wealth, glorie and dignitie list not by their eyes to these inuisible thinges, and therefore they are puffed vp with pride and caried away with all nysom lustes. But such as are in pouerty, contempt of the worlde, afflicted in body or minde, are forced to list by their eyes, that the helpe which is inuisible may be made to them visible by faith, according to the promise of God made vnto them in his word.

These are the words therefore of a man that felt the same that we feele, that is to say, our hearts to be oppressed with sorrow and heavines: when we thinking our selues to be desolate and forsaken, can see no succour: when we see, not riches but pouertie: not glorie but ignominy, shame and confusion. In these calamities the heart is an heauie burden, weying downe to the ground the eyes and the head, that they can see or thinke vpon nothing else but terrene and earthly thinges. Therefore he exhorteth vs by his owne example to list vp our eyes, and looke to inuisible thinges which the word promisseth we shall certainly enjoy. Thus we see the nature of faith liuely set out in this psalme: Nowe followeth, as it were an explication what hills he speaketh of.

Vers. 1. My helpe commeth of the Lord which hath made heauen and earth.

He speaketh here of such hills as the eyes of the flesh could not

see. For who was so quicke of sight to see, or so wise to perceiue and vnderstande, that the hill Moria was a holy hill. A heape of earth the bodily eyes might see: but the holynes, the power and the Paiesitie of God there p̄sente, they could not see, nor that the word of the Lord was there, that the Lord had promised there to dwell and abide, that he had put a memorizall of his name in that place, and that there he would be sought, there he would be found. For he that sought not God in this place, could not finde him in heauen: Like as since God hath reuelled him self in J̄s man Christ, we truly say and also beleue that whosoever doe not embrace and by faith lay hold on this man which was bozne of the virgin, they can neuer beleue in God: but although they say they beleue in the maker of heauen and earth, yet doe they in deede beleeue in the Idoll of their owne heart, for without Christ there is no true God. Therefore Dauid beboldeth these hills in Ierusalem, not with bodily eyes, as the ore doth his stall, but with the eyes of the spirit he seeth that God dwelleth there by his word. Therefore these hills are nowe no moze earth and moles, but they are the hills of the Loyde and the fulnes of his godhead: so that without these hills, concerning God there can nothing be found. Therefore it is truly sayd of the Prophet, that from these hillies commeth help and succour, that is to say, from God dwelling and abiding there by his word. Like as we beleue that Christ is the throne of grace in the which is the treasure of all good thinges and heauenly blessings to be found, and without the which there is nothing.

Now, in that he doth not onely say: My helpe commeth from the Lord, but addeth mozeouer: which made heauen & earth: he reppoueth & condemneth all other helps which men seeke & procure vnto them selues besides God, with false trust & affiance in J̄s same, as Ihu of his owne imagination. So is Mammon a god also: that is to say, is worshipped of men as a god: & helpeth them also sometimes. But in penury of food & vittells what succour can he bying? no man can satisfie his hungrie belly with gold and silver. Likewise in drought and barrennes of the earth what can he help? What good can he do in diseases & infirmities of J̄s body? If then in these coppozall maladiies he can not help, what can he doe when the conscience is troubled with sinne & the horrour of death? It is therefore but a false pleasure and delite that Mammon byingeth which is but only to satisfie & please the eyes, as a picture of paine.

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ted table. Against these helps therfore & such like, which þ world seeketh after, the pꝛophet setteth the Lord him self, who made not only gold & siluer, not only fooðe & sustenance, heauen and earth, that is to say, angels, men, and the whole world, but besides these, giueth remission of sinnes, faith, righteousness, loy & peace of hart, with euerlasting life. He is (sayth the Pꝛophet) my almighty and sure help, of whom I can not doubt, that he will euer sayle me the twinkling of an eye. To this Lord I flye for aide & succour, who not onely in this life can and doth giue healt & welfare for a fewe yerres, wth securitie of conscience & cōtempt of death & all þ furies of þ world: but also after this life, eternal felicity & life euerlasting.

Thus the Pꝛophet inflameth him selfe & stirreth vp his faith for our example, that we likewise should magnifie the blessings & good gifts of God in vs, & also our hope & trust in him. For if the riche men of the world doe glozy in their money, if they haunt of their wealth and riches, whý should not we also glozy in the trust & confidence we haue in God, which hath made heauen and earth: which hath also in his hand all thinges necessary both for this life & for the life to come. But because these thinges are inuisible & can not be seene but with spirituall eyes, therfore we commonly neglect the. And albeit the Lord do sometimes hide these helps from vs, & let vs feeble the lacke therof for a time (as he doth in deede, to make vs the moze desirous of the, the moze to esteeme them when we haue them, and to be the moze thankfull to God for the same) yet must we learne surely to trust and vndoubtedly beleue that they will come.

Verse. 3. He will not suffer thy foote to slippe: For he that keepeth Israel will not slumber.

This verse dependeth vpon those that go before. For the Pꝛophet, because he began with an exhortation to faith, now goeth about as it were with promises, to moue and exhorte the faithfull to hold fast this confidence & trust in the help & succour of the Lord. And very necessarie it is for vs, to exhorte and stirre vp, not onely other, but our selues also, because of the present daungers and afflictions. For seeing the thinges which discomfote vs are present, and they which comfote vs are absent, therfore so long as the present thinges which here vs do endure, it is needefull that we should be stirred vpp with the word and exhortation to perseverance

Trust & assistance in the helpe & succour of the Lord.

and patience. For this experience of trouble and affliction must be topped with doctrine & exhortation. For our sight is so dimmed, that we can not see these things and the ende of afflictions. Therefore the flesh ever seeketh means how it may be deliuered, and when it can see none (as the carnall eyes can neuer see Gods maruelous helpe & deliuerance) then is it miserably vexed and tormented and can finde no rest nor quietnes. We haue neede therefore of exhortations out of the word of God, that this streames of our heart may be dilated and enlarged, which he alone can doe that seeth the end of our tentations. We must heare what his word sayeth, and not what our owne heart saith, which onely seeth and seleteth the beginning of tentations and afflictions, but the end thereof it can not see.

Therefore the holy Ghost here amplifieth and enlargeth the matter, that the exhortation may be the more effectuell. And here is first to be noted, that if the contrary were not, that is to say, no tentation felt or perill to be feared, then were this exhortation but in vayne. For if tentation should haue an ende as soone as it beginneth, or if as soone as we feele any lacke, God should giue vs that we desire, wherfore then should God promise any thing? Therefore neither is doctrine necessarie in those things that we know before, neither exhortation when we are out of daunger and feele no tentation. Therefore where the Prophet saith: He will not suffer thy foote to slippe, he plainly sheweth what is the state of the afflicted. For when they feele themselves to be in daunger through the grievousnes of tentation, their hearts are heavy and careful, least they should perish and be forsaken of the Lord for euer. Here haue they neede therefore of exhortation, that their faith faile not or be not utterly quenched. For reason can iudge no other wise, but that a man being in this case is cleane reiectet & forsaken of God, and after his owne sense feeleth that to be true which a certaine souldier was wont to say: that there are none which suffer more misery or are in greater daunger then such as serue God and their Prince faithfully.

Here is now no succour but to flee to the word of faith. And first this word pronounceth, that all they which will liue a goodly life in Christ Iesu, shall suffer trouble and affliction. It setteth forth Christ for an ensample, who by the crosse entered into glory. It telleth vs that we must be made like vnto his image that is, we must

suffer

suffer with him if we looke to be glorified with him. Then we see that troubles and crosses are prepared for vs. It sheweth moreover what is to be done and what remedie is to be sought in such afflictions: euen to resoyt to the word, to harken to the word, to rest in the word and the promise. It promisseth that temptation shall not continue with vs for euer, as our hearts doe iudge: but rather it telleth vs, that it is but momentane and shoyt. And Christ compareth the afflictions of the faithfull to the trauell of a woman, where death and life are ioynd together as neare as may be. For she that euen now saue nothing but death, and despayred of the life both of her selfe and of her childe, as soone as the childe is bozne forgetteth all her sorowes past. Sainct Paule sayth: the afflictions of this life are not to be compared to the glory which shall be reueiled vpon vs. This iudgement of the word thou must followe, and not thine owne sense, which so iudgeth of the crosse and afflictions, that of a molehill or rather of a mote it maketh a great mountaine. So blind is reason and so vnable to iudge in matters of faith. For that which God counteth but as a moment, a droppe, a sparckle, reason iudgeth to be euerlasting, a huge sea and a terrible fire. But thou wilt say: I finde and feele it so to be. What then? Doest thou feele or doeth God see and knowe moze perfectly, thinkest thou? We must not iudge thereof according to our owne feeling, but according to that which the word of God pronounceth and iudgeth, or rather God himselfe in his word.

Remedies in afflictions.

The iudgement of the word in afflictions must onely be followed.

The storyes doe recorde that when Iulianus persecuted Athanasius and threatened his destruction, Athanasius so little regarded the daunger thereof, that he likened the same to a clowde which the Sunne by litle and litle consumeth to nothing. What could be spoken moze contemptuously of that outrageous cruelty attempted by such a mightie Monarke and head of the Roman Empire? which rather might haue bene compared to a huge sea or a terrible fire. But as Athanasius sayd and beleued, euen so it came to passe: for Iulianus was slayne shortly after, and so Athanasius escaped the daunger. By whose example let vs learne how to iudge of our owne troubles and perills, and looke to the word of the promiser, that we depend not vpon our selues and our owne sense, but vpon the promise of the Lord. Death, pestilence, famine, hatred of the world and sclaunder, with such like, may well be:

The history of Iulian and Athanasius.

resembled to an horrible tempest. And here if we follow reason, we are gone. But we must lift vpper our eyes to the hills, and harken to this voyce: I am the Lorde thy God, therefore magnifie my word, my helpe and my succour. Thus if we doe, then begin we to contemne that which to vs before seemed so huge and terrible: then the word & promise beginneth to kinde in our hartes and bringeth such strength and courage, that we are able to say: Nowe, be it neuer so huge a tempest, neuer so terrible a storme, let it come. Here is God, here is his worde, I will not feare. Thus is all the rage and furie of the Dewill, yea euen sinne and death it selfe brought to nothing, and nowe is it become, as it were a mote, which before seemed to vs a mighty and huge mountayne.

Thus must we learne the distinctions of the holy Ghost. God taketh away thy wife, thy children. Thou fallest into sickness and infirmities of body. Thou lovest thy goodes, thine estimation, the peace and tranquillitie of conscience, yea and some time, according to thine owne sense and feeling, Christ him selfe also. These are great matters in deede. But beware that whilst thou iudgeth these thinges after thine owne sense, thou make not of a droppe an infinite sea, and of a sparckle a flaming fire. Though it be neuer so great which thou feelest and sufferest, yet God is greater. If God and Christ then perish not, if they still liue and reigne, what if thou lose thy wife, thy children, thy goodes, yea and thy life also? For what are all these if thou compare them to the inestimable grace of God and the riches which he hath promised in his word, but mere nothing? Therefore let vs lift by our mindes to these heauenly riches, and let vs learne rightly to discern betweene the crosse in respect of it selfe, that is, of the flesh and the sense of our owne heart, and in respect of God and his rich promise. Which if we consider as it is in it selfe and without Christ, what trouble is so small that shall not breake ouerthowe vs, and so shall every trouble be vnto vs intolerable. But if we behold the same in respect of God with the eyes of faith, though our afflictions and calamities seeme neuer so great and greuous, yet the superabundant mercy of God in Christ swalloweth them vpper all. Who albeit he suffereth vs to be afflicted for a litle season, yet shall the ende be full of ioy and comfort. So sayeth the Prophet Esay: For a litle while haue I forsaken thee. This momentane and

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short time, to the flesh seemeth an eternitie: But (as I said) our carnall eyes doe not deceiue vs: Therefore we must iudge according to Gods promises concerning inuisible things; and see what God hath said in his word.

This is the exercise of faith, whereof David speaketh in this place, admonishing vs to looke to the word and promise, and to lift vp our eyes to inuisible things, and thereafter to iudge; and not according to things present. And here experience teacheth vs what an infinite wisdom true diuinitie is, which in this life we can neuer fully and perfectly attaine vnto. For to what sudden mutations this life is subiect, we see: To day allue and in good health, to morrow dead and gone. Yea how infinite are the troubles, calamities, tentations and daungers wherewith our life is tossed as a shippe on the sea; which so terrifie vs that heauen and earth are to little for vs; yea the whole creature is to vs a very hell. This is the nature of flesh: which Satan moreouer so inspireth and bewitcheth, that it seeth not God; but rather (as it suggeth) some great and horrible mischiefe: not life, but death and destruction. But this is no iudgement, but rather a delusion of the flesh and the deuil: against the which we must fight, yea and be sure that euery day our destruction (as to vs it seemeth) God is present with vs; and in our death Christ our King liueth: in whose sight our tribulations and afflictions, yea and death it selfe are altogether, (as you would say) but one nothing: and if we compare them vnto God by the iudgement of faith, we shall see them so to be in deede. But who hath sufficiently learned thus to doe? Somewhat we may say, and teach other after a sort: but vse and experience, with inward practise and feeling is that which maketh a right diuine and a true Christian in deede, so that he may be able boldly to affirme and say with David: He will not suffer thy foote to slippe: that is to say, he will not suffer thee to be utterly overthiowne and perisht. But the flesh saith the contrary; because it feeleth, not onely thy foote to slippe, but is selfe also to be troden vnder foote.

Beholde the sonne of God what he suffered: Behold Iohn Baptist, the virgin Mary, the Apostles, the Prophets what they suffered. Behold þ church at this day what danger it is in; what troubles and afflictions it continually suffereth. And this is the state of the godly. Upon the experience wherof ariseth this prouerbe:

C. ii.

The exercise of faith.

Experience and practise maketh a right Christian.

The more wicked, the more happy. And therefore the woollie fear-
ing and shunning these daungers, can neuer abide the Gospell,
And thus it appeareth to them not to be true, that David sayeth
here: The Lord wil not suffer thy foote to slippe: but rather the
contrary, that he causeth thy foote to slippe. Albeit it doth but
seeme so (for he doth not so in deede) and that to the flesh onely; but
contrariwise, to the spirit and saith it is exaltation and gloyp be-
foze God. They iudge that death which is suffered for the confes-
sion of the Gospell, to be a beginning of a better and eternall life,
Ignominy, shame and contempt of the worlde they count inesti-
mable gloyp in the sight of God. This is the iudgement of saith,
albeit the flesh shrinketh otherwise. But we may not iudge after
the flesh: for if we do, what needeth then the doctrine of the word?
what neede exhortations? what neede the promises? Therefore
we must turne the euill into good, and where the flesh concludeth
that it is continually troden vnder foote, there saith must confesse
and say, that by the crosse and by these afflictions we are made like
to the sonne of God: fashioned like vnto Chyill: For these things
are to be beleued as inuisible and also insensible; and not as things
to be seene and felt.

The iudge-
ment of
saith.

But such as will not beleue, but follow their owne sense and fe-
ling, doe rather chooseth the gloyp & pleasures of this worlde, which
so litle while endure, and so suddenly vanish away. But how mis-
erable shall their condition be, when, after these transitory, momen-
tane and vaine pleasures they shall sing and seele nothing but an-
guish & tormentes, with weeping & wailing for euer & without end.
How much better had it bene for them to haue suffered for a while
with Lazarus both sickness and pouerty, then for a litle season to
flourish with the rich glutton in welth and prosperitie, & with him
to be tormented in euerlasting fire? This doctrine therfore pertai-
neth to those which desire to beleue & not to fele, that they may di-
scerne betwene God & their afflictions, not fixing their eyes vpon
the present calamities, but looking by to the inuisible help promi-
sed in the word. For those troubles & daungers whereunto y saith
full are subiect, as to deede cause the foote to slippe: but yet so that
saith wil not suffer them to fall, but maketh them able to passe o-
uer these rocks; he they neuer so daungereous, & to compare their
momentane afflictions with those things which are infinite and e-
uerlasting, as to God him selfe, his power, his grace, and finally

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eternall life, which God hath promised in Christ to them that be-
lieue in him. To know these things it is necessary, that we may be
able to comfort both our selues and our brethren when we can be-
ginne to rage, when troubles arise, when for the worlds sake we
are hated, spoiled, persecuted and put to death. In these daungers
whither shall we runne? Euen this must be our refuge: to say and
confesse that God is greater then all our miseries: And albeit we
perish, or rather seeme in our owne sence so to doe, yet God peri-
sheth not, and therefore we must assuredly trust in his goodness,
mercy and power, and the sence and feeling of the spirite must be
exalted (as ye would say) aboue the feeling of the flesh and of our
owne hart. Thus they that will not doe, let them follow their own
lusts and pleasures, and yet let them be sure that they shal drinke
by the dregges of the cuppe: wherof the godly drinke but a part,
as the Prophet saith.

God is greater then all
our afflictions and calamities.

Psal. 75.

Notwithstanding many times the godly doe finde also tempo-
rall helpe and deliuerance. For God doth not so neglect his ser-
uants that he will leaue them utterly destitute of comfort in this
life. Dauid being drinen out of his kingdome was restored to the
same againe. Ezechias stricken with a deadly disease, recovered
and was restored to perfect health. The Jewes also dispersed and
scattered among the Gentiles, were brought home againe. And e-
uen here also faith hath her proper office, to waite and looke for
this helpe and succour: for it commeth not by & by when we haue
need thereof or when we desire the same. Now, as the godly in
such daungers find not alwayes help and deliuerance: euen so the
wicked doe not alwayes prosper, but euen in this life are horribly
plaged for their impietie. The kingdom of the Pope hath flouri-
shed long, and yet we see that much of his power wealth and ri-
ches is diminished, and the terrible vengeance of God is ready to
fall vpon him and his for their impietie. Our nobilitie and gentle-
men at this day contemne the ministry, plucke away the liuings
of the Church, and spoyle the poore pastors and ministers therof:
But the time will come (I nothing doubt) when one Pastor shall
be more regarded then x. such gentlemen. And thus God sheweth
and will shew his iudgement in the defence of the godly, euen by
temporall or temporall punishment vpon the wicked. Therefore
we ought so much the more strongly to cleaue to the word, and to
hope and looke for succour, lifting vp our eyes from this sensible

C.iii.

miserie to Gods inuisible help and succour. Such things as here after followe in the Psalm, tende to the same sense and meaning: for the meaning of the spirite is, abundantly with counsell and exhortation to edifie the Church.

Ver. 4. Beholde, he wil not sleepe nor slumber that kepeth Israel.

To the flesh
God seemeth
to be no kee-
per but a de-
stroyer.

God is a kee-
per and still
watcheth
ouer vs.

These also after the iudgement of the fleshe are deceauable wordes. For is this to keepe and defend, when we are cast into prison? deliuered to the tormentor to be burned? when we are vexed of Satan and of the world with many and sundry afflictions? yea when as Christ him selfe is fastened to the crosse? when Iohn Baptist is beheaded at the request of a strumpet? Is it not extreme folly to call this a keeping and defending, when we see nothing else but an vtter forsaking and desolation? Therefore the flesh vnderstandeth these wordes in the contrary sense: that is for God the keeper and defender, God the forsaker and destroyer. These are wordes therefore of the spirite and of faith, and not of the fleshe or carnall sense. For after the flesh God had no regarde of the Patriarke Iacob, when Ioseph was cast away by the crueltie of his brethren, and yet God did afterwarde declare that he had a care of him when he did so aduance Ioseph that he became in a manner the king of all Egypt. Likewise God doth not so keepe vs but that we must dye: yea we must see the departing of our wiues, our children, our parents: we must be continually troubled and vexed of Satan: we must suffer many iniuries of the ingratefull and wicked worlde. How doth this care now appeare in keeping and preserving vs? wherein doth it appeare that God watcheth ouer vs? Therefore we must lift by our eyes to the hillies where the Lord hath published his wil and his word. There must we harken what he speaketh out of his holy temple, namely that he, neither sleepeeth, nor forsaketh vs, as the flesh peruersely iudgeth: but kepeth vs, careth for vs and watcheth ouer vs. This word faith layeth hold on, & according to this word it iudgeth, although the flesh say and iudge the contrary neuer so much, & according to his owne sense and feeling do think that God neither seeth nor heareth: but is like to those which the Psalmist speaketh of: They haue eares & heare not, they haue eyes & see not. Therefore he extollet his owne god Mammon, that he may haue alwayes money at hand, and

and what so euer may maintaine the pleasures of this life. This vanitie is it that the flesh so magnifieth.

But he seeth not what shall followe when he must dye and forsake his riches, and therefore this keeper, this watchman which keepeth and preferueth vs by faith and by the word, he nothing regardeth. Let vs therefore which do beleue, and see this miserable blindness of the world, be surely perswaded that this hidden & invisible protection, vnder the which we abide by the power of faith and of the word, is almightie. For to this the holy Scripture lea-
 veth vs, and teacheth that the kingdome of the deuill is the king-
 dom of sinne and death, and therefore euery moment he causeth
 men to sinne, murdereth them, seduceth and bringeth them into
 errour, or at least goeth about by all meanes so to doe. Thus are
 we alwayes in death, in daunges of sinne, errour and damnable o-
 pinions. And what doe we whiles Satan is thus occupied? we
 teach, we write, we reade, we sleepe, we eate, we drinke, and we ex-
 ercise such other offices and functions of the body & of the senses.
 Here our diuinitie teacheth vs euen by our owne experience, that
 if God did not watch when we sleepe, if he were not carefull for vs
 when we are careles, we should perish euery moment, we should
 lose our tongues, our eyes, our eares, our hands, our feete and
 our liues also. And for as much as these things doe many times
 chauce, and when we little doubt or thinke thereof, our wiues,
 our children or our frendes dye or else fall into some great daun-
 ger, it is a manifest token that the kingdom of the Deuill is the
 kingdom of death and sinne.

The king-
dom of the
deuill.

In this kingdom because we liue whiles we are in this world,
 hereof it cometh, that we often times offend and fall into many
 sinnes. Thus Dauid became both an adulterer and a murderer.
 So that hereby we may learne that the kingdome of the deuill in
 this world is to aduance sinne, to murder & destroy. Now there-
 fore, that we yet liue and beatch, that we fall not daily into gre-
 uous and horrible sinnes, it is the great mercy, goodness, and pro-
 tection of this good keeper and watchman whom Dauid here spea-
 keth of. Thus both our diuinitie teach, and thus doe the goodly be-
 leue: For by the ir owne experience they proue, and by experience
 of the whole Church, that Satan wil neuer rest untill he destroy
 if he may, either soule or body. The destruction of the soule he see-
 keth by lying, by corrupt doctrine, by wicked & false worshipping

and seruing. The destruction of the body he attempteth by infinite sleights & practises, wherof we haue experience daily in our felues and other. For as much then as these things doe not come to passe either in such sort or so often as Satan would, it is the densitie, not of Satan, but of this our vigilant keeper and watchman.

Thus we are taught euen by our owne experience (taking this for a principle, that the kingdom of the deuill is the kingdome of sinne and of death) that we are continually and euery moment preserved from death and other daungers both corporally and spiritually by the singular goodnes and grace of Christe, into whose kingdom through baptism and faith we are translated. And hereof come these heavenly sayings of the Prophets: The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord, his mercy endureth for ever: &c. In deede sometimes Satan so preuaileth, and hath such successe in that he goeth aboute, that by sudden plagues he bringeth men to horrible destruction. Such examples ought to warne vs of those mischeuous practises which he continually goeth about, and fauine would bring to passe, as he might easily doe if he were not letted by the vigilancy of our good watchman in heauen. For, as for the power of this our aduersary, I doe beleue that he is able in one hower to destroy all the people that are liuing vpon the earth. Now, if both he be able and also leaueth no practise vnattempted so to doe, why then is it not done? Because our good keeper watcheth ouer vs. But these be matters of faith: they muste be beleued, and therefore he addeth this word beholde. Whereby it may appeare that his purpose is, earnestly to commend and set forth the great vigilancie and tender care of God towards vs, whereby he keepeth and defendeth vs that we perish not.

And here note that this care and vigilancie for the safety and preservation of our life, countrey, cities, families, peace and tranquillitie amongst vs, &c. is of the Prophet wholy attributed vnto God, when as notwithstanding God vseth to worke the same by other meanes, as first by the ministry of Angels, and then also of men, as of Princes and other inferiour magistrates, &c. Whereby we are admonished that these inferiour meanes which God vseth as his instrumentes for our preservation are not able to doe vs any good at all, except God him self take vpon him to be our chiefe watchman and defender. God therefore vseth the ministry of these for our succour and reliefe, euen as he doth bread, drinke and other suste-

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sustenance. For as bread and drinke doe not preserve our life (for when no man should dye, and yet because of the ordinance of God and the fragile condition of our nature, they are necessary for the sustentation of our life): so doe these meane helpes nothing availe vs except God the keeper of Israel doe watch for our succour and defence. This watching, this defence the word of God doth reueile, but the flesh can not see it, and therefore by a contrary sense thus it expoundeth these wordes: The keeper of Israel, that is to say, the forsaker of Israel doth not sleepe, that is, he is not onely in a moste deade sleepe, but also is without all sense, and is in deede nothing. For reason iudgeth according to euery pinch and pange that the flesh feeleth, and according to the beginning of afflictions or first assaults, and not according to the word, and the end of deliuerance which God promiseth in the word.

Verse. 5. The Lord is thy keeper and he is thy shadowe (or protection) at thy right hand.

In this verse he setteth forth more at large, the certainty of Gods ready helpe and protection. Wherein, speaking to euery one pynally, he saith: The Lord is thy keeper: that no man should doubt to apply that vnto him selfe for his owne comforte, which pertainerth to al Israel. He is called the shadow at thy right hand, to teach thee that he is at hand and standeth euen by thy side ready to defend thee. Or else: the Lord is thy shadow at thy right hand: That is, he prospereth all thy affaires, he giueth successe to all thou takest in hand. If thou be a preacher & a teacher in the Church of God: if thou trauell in thy vocation by night and with a good conscience to provide for thy selfe and thy family, thou shalt not lack thy crosse. But be of good comfort: for the Lord hath promised to be on thy right hand: he will ayde thee and succour thee in all things that thou shalt either doe or suffer.

But here againe we must remember (as I said before) that these things are spoken and taught in vaine, except we first thinke our selues to be, as it were utterly forsaken and destitute of al help and succour. Therefore, when he speaketh of this tender care that the Lord hath ouer his in keeping, in shadowing, in defending them that they perish not, he meaneth therewithall that they are such as seeme to them selues so to be forsaken and neglected of God, as if

he had no care of them at all. This is therefore a sweete doctrine and full of consolation, that the Lord sheweth him selfe to knowe and to pittie our miseries and calamities; and commaundeth vs to beleue that he is our shadowe to couer & defend vs against all perils & daungers. In him therefore let vs assuredly trust, with comfortable expectation of most ioyfull deliuerance: who hath promised to be with vs, with a fatherly care to prouide for vs, to defend vs, to strengthen, to succour and to comfort vs in all our troubles, afflictions and calamities.

Verse. 6. The sunne shall not hurt thee by day, nor the moone by night.

The heate of the Sunne maketh mens bodies weake & feeble. So doth the Moone also hurt, not onely with colde, but also with moisture. By these speeches he meaneth all manner of tentations and perils, and that God will be with vs in the middelt of them, to succour vs and to deliuer vs, albeit we seeme for a litle while to beate all the heate and burden of the day aloner: that is, to be utterly forsaken and destitute of all helpe and succour. But if we were blame, then should the tentation haue no ende, yea it should presently swallow vs by: for we are not able of our selves to endure the space of one moment. Now the Lord suffereth Satan to vomet out his poyson and to practise against vs the beginning of his malice: but he will not suffer him to hurt so much as he would doe. Therefore because we haue the shadowe to couer vs, euen the presence & mightie protection of the Lord, we should patiently endure the beginning of sorowes; that is to say, the light, shoye, and momentane afflictions of this life, beeing sure that euen in death our life is hidden and safely kept with Christ in God, and we shall overcome all the fiery darts and cruel assaults of Satan.

Verse. 7. The Lord shall preserue thee from all euill: he shall preserue thy soule.

That which the verse going before hath expressed by an allegory, is here simply set forth and without figure. The soule here signifyeth the life. Albeit therefore thou suffer neuer so greates and greuous afflictions, yea euen death it self, yet shall thou not perishe

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because God keepeth thy life. An outward appearance, and to the judgement of the flesh thou seemest to dye, but in deede it is not so, because thy life, even the Lord thy God liueth, &c. So he saith in an other Psalm: The Lord preserveth the soules of his Saints. *Psal. 97.*

Verse. 8. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from hence forth and for ever.

That is to say: whether so ever thou goest, the Lord will be with thee, he will preserve thee, he will defende and keepe thee: he will neuer forsake thee nor suffer thee to perishe. To goe out, is to goe to the woorkes of thy vocation. To come in againe signifieth to returne from labour and travell, to rest and quietnes. Whatsoever thou shalt goe aboute, shall have good successe and prosper vnder thy hand. Thus the Prophet in this Psalm sheweth the nature of faith to be, not as it were a deade affection or qualitie of the minde, as the Papistes doe dreame, but a singular woyle and motion of the holy Ghost, whereby we iudge according to the worde, contrary to that which we seele, whiche we see, and by experience doe proue: whereby also we overcome all kindes of tentations. Of this faith the Papistes can no better iudge then a blinde man can iudge of colours.

The 122. Psalm.

I reioyced when they said vnto me, &c.

This Psalm is a thanks giuing for the excellent gift of the worde of God. Which verue is therefore the more rare to be found, for that the worde is suerly where so horribly contemned in the worlde, not onely of the rude multitude, but also of those that will be counted both learned and wise: whose blasphemous tongues are sharpened against this most precious and incomparable benefite, not onely in speaking contemptuously and spitefully of the Gospell, but also imputing to the hollesome worde of life, whatso ever mischiefe reigneth in the members of Satan, as seditious sectes, auarice, filthy life, and such like. It is therefore

The argument of the Psalm.

the greates goodnes of the Lord that in this horrible fustiditie there are yet some which reuerence the word, which gladiy heare the word, which delight to talke of the word and workes of the Lord. This psalme therefore was not written to those dogges and swine the papistes, heretikes and persecutors of the worde, but to the elect soules and holy mindes, which exult and reioyce for this heauenly visitation, wherby the day spring from on high, through the tender mercie of our God hath visited vs, lying in the shadowe of death, as Zacharie saith. For albeit that all men haue the word, and all heare the sound of the Gospell, yet herein they differ, that some haue the word only: some acknowledge and feelee them selues to haue it and therefore doe reioyce and giue thanks vnto God for y same, where as other delite rather in their riches and in the pleasures of this life, then in that heauenly word, which bringeth euermlasting life and saluation. Therefore S. Paule counteth it for a speciall grace of God, not onely to haue the giftes of God, but also to acknowledge them, to delight & reioyce in them, and to be thankfull vnto God for them.

A singular gift of God to acknowledge how inestimable a benefite it is to haue the word.

But amongst all the giftes of God, the gift of his holy word is the moste excellent, and if we take away the word, what doe we else, but take away the sunne out of the worlde? For what is the world without the word: but euen hel and the very kingdome of Satan, although there be in it neuer so many wise men, learned, welchp, and mighty? For what can all these doe without the word? which alone bringeth life and comfozt to the soule, peace and quietnes to the conscience: which alone keepeth vs in the fauour of God: without the which there is no religion, & so no God: wherby also the world is preserued: For without the word and Christi the world could not stand the twinkling of an eye. Albeit therefore there be many and wonderful giftes of God in the world, giuen for the vse of man, yet the only gift which containeth and preserueth all the other, is the word of God, which pronounceth and witnesseth to our consciences that God is our mercifull father: which also promisseth vnto vs remission of sinnes and life euermlasting. Now, if we should lack these comfozts, what comfozt wert it I pray you for vs to liue? yea this life, to vs were no life at all. But these thinges are spirituall, and the knowledge thereof is so much the more hard for vs to attaine vnto, because it springeth not out of our owne hearts, but commeth from aboue. But now to

the

the Psalme.

When this Psalme was written, the temple was not builden: but the tabernacle of Moyses yet still remained: which, albeit it continued not in one place nor in one tribe (for it was also in Silo and Gibeon) yet had it one certaine promise, that where soever it were, there would the Lord be present; heare the prayers of his people, accept their sacrifice and shewe him selfe mercifull, as the text sheweth: VWhere so euer I shall set a memorial of my name,

The tabernacle of Moyses.

&c. Therefore so long as it was in Ephraim in the city of Silo, the name of God was there called vpon, the word of God was there heard, and the Lord was there worshipped with faith, prayer, and sacrifice, &c. untill at length, when impietie and idolatrie began to encrease, the arke was carried out of Silo into the host against the Philistines, and of them was taken. But when the Philistines for this prophanation were diuers wayes plagued, the arke was translated to the Gabaonites. When it had bene there a while, David brought it home into his owne citie, as it is written, 2. Reg. 6. and there it came into his minde to build a temple vnto the Lord. For it was not meete (thought he) that he should dwell in a house made with Cedar trees, and that the Lord and King of heauen should dwell in a tabernacle couered with skinner. And this purpose at the first seemed good to Nathan the prophet: but afterward he was admonished of God by reuelation, that David should not build the temple, for that was reserved for his sonne Salomon to doe, which was a peaceable Prince and not giuen to warre as David was. Herewithall was added that ioyfull promise of the eternall posteritie of David and his true sonne Christ, 2. Reg. 7. David therefore in this Psalme, as it seemeth to me, intreateth of the first part of this promise: wherein he reioyceth, not onely for him selfe, but also for the whole people of God, for that God had appointed a place in Ierusalem both certaine & permanent, wherein he would be worshipped.

Albeit therefore that David doth here partly signifie that house which Salomon afterwarde built, yet specially he treateth of the fruites that should come of the building of that temple, namely that the word of the Lord should there be published, prayer made, and sacrifice offered. This is that ioy and gladnes which David so remarkably stretcheth forth in this Psalme, wher he becholeth the admirable goodnes of God towards his people, in giuing to them the

knowledge of his worde, in reuealing his face vnto them, in perswading their hearts of his good will towards them.

The papists dispute much of God, but without the word & the true knowledge of God. They neither teach nor yet once thinke what the will of God is towards vs, or what he will do to vs, for say they, we know not whether god loue vs or hate vs. And to this end they blasphemously allege this saying out of Ecclesiastes: No man knoweth whether he be worthy of loue or of hatred, to other like. For what is it to talke of God, if thou knowe not what his will is towards thee, & to what end he hath obtained thee? They knowe not God thus, know him not at all. It is the word of God therefore that certifieth vs of the will of God towards vs, what pleaseth or displeaseth him, what he would haue vs to doe, and what he will do with vs. The barbarous & brutish ignorance wherof hath brought forth all those monstrous idolatries in the kingdom of Antichrist. That which is forbidden by the law of God in the 7. commandement, is thought to be but a small sinne in comparison of the rest, as murder, &c. Notwithstanding, suppose that this commandement were not: what great enormities, what horrible impieties would ensue? We should become like rauening vultures & beares, destroying and deuouring whatsoeuer they may come by: yea like vnto swine, which when they come to their draffe & swill, if every one could deuour so much as might suffice al, they would leaue none for the rest. Therefore, that our goods are in safety, yea rather all that we haue is not spoiled and taken from vs, it is the benefite of the seventh precept. What a life would this be if our wiues were not in safety, if our children were vncertaine, if men might resist the Magistrate, and do what they list? Would it not be a continuall hel? What we enjoy therefore true & godly matrimony, that the common welth and the lawes are preserved, in which and by which we liue in safety, rest and quietnes, all these are the benefites of the second table. But let vs ascend to higher matters. What woe is this life if the first table were not? If there were no Sabbath, no Church, no place wherein the word might be published & taught? If there were no knowledge of God, no invocation of God, but every man had his peculiar idoll to worship? These are farre greater and more horrible euils, then those that are committed against the second table, and yet so much the lesse regarded, because they are spiritual. But if we had the eyes of the spirit, and did see how

The meaning of this place is, that man knoweth not by these outward things, that is by prosperitie, or aduersitie, whome God doth fauour or hate. Eccl. 9.

What inestimable benefit the word bringeth.

The benefits of the second table.
The benefits of the first table.

What woe is this life if the first table were not? If there were no Sabbath, no Church, no place wherein the word might be published & taught? If there were no knowledge of God, no invocation of God, but every man had his peculiar idoll to worship? These are farre greater and more horrible euils, then those that are committed against the second table, and yet so much the lesse regarded, because they are spiritual. But if we had the eyes of the spirit, and did see how

how many soules Mahomet & the Pope do carry into hel, it should be much more gracious unto vs then if we were every house in daunger of losing both goods and life.

We ought first therefore to reioyce for these small benefits which we enjoy by the second table, whereby both our goods and bodies are in safety. Small benefits I call them in comparison of those which we enjoy by the first table, whereby God so abundantly openeth the treasures & riches of his mercy towards vs in revelling him self unto vs, in certifying vs what his will is towards vs, what he hath decreed to doe and how to deale with vs, in giuing vs his word, saith & the holy Ghost, in hearing our prayers & increasing dayly the Church by his word. These things are so great, that no hart can conceiue them, no tongue can expresse them: whereby our soules are deliuered from the tyranny of the deuil, whereby we enjoy peace & tranquillitie of mind, & a good conscience, whereby also we attaine and retaine the true knowledge of God, & whereby many are instructed to eternal life. These things David beholdeth with the eye of faith: these things he deeply mayeth & considereth in him self, & therefore is stirred up to thanks giuing, which the inward ioy of hart compelleth him unto. For such are thankfull in deed, which do embrace y^e graces & gifts of God, & reioyce in the giuer. But such as feele not this ioy, albeit they set forth this psalm in piping & singing, in organs and mincing musicke neuer so much, yet are they vnthankfull, because they do not vnderstand these benefits.

The spiritu-
all giftes
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giueth by his
word.

These things I doe therefore recite, that all men may beware of that detestable impietie and headspyring of all mischiese in the Church of God, the contempt of loathing of the word: for that is an horrible apostacie and a falling away from God. When men are once come to this loathing of y^e word, it is not possible that any true or sincere cogitation of the spiritual life or remission of sinnes should enter into their heartes. But alas, we see that there is nothing at this day more common. For how wickedly doe the nobility, gentlemen, rich & welch, yea and all other inferiour sortes of men at this day contemne the word of life, the gospel of saluation, the ministry & ministers, more esteeming their earthly possessions, wealth and pleasures, then all the sweete, comfortes of the gospel? These y^e children of God are compelled to behold as Loth did the Zodomites, not onely despising, molesting, and spitefull p^{er}secuting them: but also liuing in all fleshly liberty, and doing

what they list. It was an horrible thing for Dauid to fall into adultery & murder: But how much more horrible is it, thus to offende against the first table, as the Angels did, and therefore were cast out of heauen? But Dauid repenting returned vnto God & found mercie: And here the godly are so much the more in daunger of this euill, by how much the fall is more easie. For this venime so secretly infecteth the soule and so creepeth in by litle and litle, that it can not almost be perceiued.

I call it a contempt of the word, not onely when the word is despised, derided, persecuted, but also when it is negligently and vnreuerently taught, heard, and learned, according to the saying of the Prophet Esay: This people honour me with their lippes, but their heart is farre from me. And this is the difference betweene those that are infected with this popson, the contempt of the word. I meane, and the childe of God, that as they are wholly bent to seeke and aduance the glory of the euertliuing God: so are these either inflamed with a diuillish desire to maintaine & set forth damnable doctrine, wicked opinions, and false worship, being wholly giuen ouer to serue the god of this worlde and their god Mammon, seeking with greedines and pleasure their owne perdition & damnation, and so albeit they are already wholly possessed in the kingdom of the deuill, yet are they merry and ioyfull: but the end shall be such as for their horrible example is set forth in the story of the Sodomites. Let vs pray vnto God therefore that he will preserve vs from this impletie, and let vs learne to sing this psalme with gladnes and thanks giuing vnto him for this inestimable benefite of his word and the pure knowledge thereof, whereby Christ the onely sacrifice for our sinnes and the sure hope of eternall life, is reucaled vnto vs. Let vs continually exercise our selues in reading, hearing, and meditating of this word, and let vs neuer think that we haue attained sufficient knowledge and taste thereof. In deede this word is so plentifully set forth in these our dayes, that it may seeme to bying with it a lothing and contempt in many: but it is not enough an hundred times to haue read it, and a thousand times to haue heard it, as in the dangerous time of tentations by experiences we feele. Therefore let vs abhorre the damnable impletie of lothing and concerning the word of life, and let vs embrace that most soet aigne verue which is called the Reuerence of the word. For Satan sleepeth not, and in deede he is neuer so strongly

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strongly armed against vs, as when he seeth that we loth and con-
temne the word, or presume of our owne knowledge.

Verse. 1. I rejoyced when they sayd vnto me: we will goe into
the house of the Lord.

The like saying he hath in the 60. Psalme. God hath spoken
in his Sanctuary, therefore I will reioyce. *¶* Therein is conteyned a
compariſon betwene his kingdom and other mighty and worship
kingdoms of the worlde. As if he should say: My kingdom is but
a small and a weake kingdom if you compare it with the power of
other kingdoms of the worlde. But this haue I that all Kings and
kingdoms haue not, namely, that in my kingdom the Lord him-
selfe, the King of all Kings speaketh out of his holy Sanctuary:
therefore my kingdom is the kingdom of God, and therein I re-
ioyce? Euen so here, sayth he, I reioyce: And why? Because it
was sayd vnto me: we will goe into the house of the Lord. That
is, God hath promised that we shall be that people which shall en-
ter into the house of *¶* Lord, And should not this cause my heart to
reioyce? For when I beholde all other nations, I see them goe into
the house of the deuil, and the temples of Idols: I see they knowe
not the true God, neither doe they worship him. Great cause haue
I therefore to reioyce, because I haue the promise of God that I
shall goe with my people into the house of the Lord.

A compari-
son betwene
the Gentiles
& the Iewes.

David sheweth himselfe here to reioyce and be glad for 2. cau-
ses: and onely that the Lord had appoynted a place wherein he
would be worshipped, euen the holy hill of Sion: but also because
he had the consent of his people so obediently to appoynt him in
the true service & worship of the Lord. Often times the Lord had
before promised by Moyses that he would appoynt such a place for
his Sanctuary as should be certaine and stable for euer: and yet
adone a thousand yeeres together the Ark of the Lord was carry-
ed hither and thither from tent to tent, from habitation to habita-
tion, hauing no certaine place to rest in: But afterwards it was
shewed vnto David, that the Lord would haue it remaine in the hill
of Sion, and that he would haue there a temple builded, wherein he
would be worshipped. By this example we are admonished that
we haue double cause to reioyce when so euer the Lord doeth not
onely facilitate our hearts by his holy spirit, but the obedience of his
worship: also both by one or other vnto the same with vs, that we may

Paralip. 17.

D

be alwaynes together in fellowship of faith. We see by stubbornnes of mans heart to be such that the greater number alwayes murmur when so euer the Lord speaketh; and therefore no small cause haue we to reioyce when we all consent together in one spirit and one mind in the true seruice and worship of the Lord.

These wordes: I reioyced when they sayd, &c. seeme to be very simple and so containe in them no great matter. But if you loke into the same with spiritual eyes, there appeareth a wonderfull great ministration in them; which because our Papistes can not see, they wold sololy and negligently pray, reade, and sing this psalme and other, that a man wold thinke there were no ale so foolish or vaine, which they wold not either reite or heare with moze courage & delight. These wordes therefore must be vnfolded & layd before the eyes of the faithful. For when he sayth we will goe into the house of the Lord: what notable thing can we see in these wordes, if we doe but onely beholde the stones, timber, gold and other ornaments of the materiall temple? But to goe into the house of the Lord significeth another manner of thing; namely to come together where we may haue God present with vs: heare his word: call vpon his holy name, and receiue helpe and succour in our necessities. Therefore is it a false definition of the temple which the Papistes make: that it is a house build with stones, timber to the honour of God. What this temple is they them selues know not. For the temple of Salomon was not therefore beautifull, because it was adorned with gold and siluer and other precious ornaments: but the cause because of that temple was; because in that place the people heare the word of the Lord, called vpon his name, found him mercifull, giuing peace and cession of sinnes, &c. This is rightly to beholde the temple, and not as the vsured Bishops beholde their detestable temple when they consecrate it.

These are then great causes of ioy and gladnes: to haue access vnto the Lord to heare his consolation, that he is our God, which will heare vs, which will deliuer vs in the time of trouble, which will forgive vs our sinnes, and at the last will giue vs euermoring life. For these grent benefites (sayth David) we giue thanks vnto God; and we reioyce that we may come together into that place wherein God worketh all these things by the power of his word. For it is the word alone whereby we knowe God; whereby we come vnto God; and whereby he bestoweth vnto the grent benefites

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of his fauour and lone vpon vs. Thus Dauid vnder these wordes:
The house of the Lord, comprehendeth God him selfe, his name
and his house, wherunto the Sabbath is dedicated, in the which
we should rest from other busines and hearken vnto the Lord spea-
king vnto vs. This is to go into the house of the Lord, and for this
benefite to reioyce and giue thanks vnto him. For this is an in-
estimable benefite and cannot be comprehended of the wicked: But
the goodly onely doe know the way and what benefites they receiue
thereby. And this the Lord also requireth of his people when he so
often commandeth in the law, that they should come together; that
they should reioyce before the Lord, they should praise and mag-
nifie his name for his benefites and greater mercies so plentifully
poured vpon them. And to this Dauid also prophesie vs by his
owne example, that with reuerence, and as it were with an admi-
ration he should exult and reioyce before the Lord.

What Dauid
meaneth by
the house of
the Lord.

Verse. 2. Our feete shall stand in thy gates O Ierusalem.

The Prophet Dauid reciteth here the common hope of the
goodly, that they would not abide & steadfastly perseuer in the house
of the Lord which he had appointed in Ierusalem, and would not
wander any more from place to place as they had done, because the
Lord had there stablished his Sanctuary, which before was often
times remoued & had no certaine resting place. This stablishing
and continuing of the Sanctuary in one certaine place preuailed
much for the confirmation of their faith. For like as when the Arke
was caried from place to place, their faith was alwayes waivering
and vnsurefast: euen so after that God had chosen vnto him selfe a
certaine habitation, he gaue thereby vnto them a more sure & ma-
nifest testimony that he would be their everlasting defender and
protector. Wherby their faith was stablished and confirmed for
euer. It is no marvell then that the people with such great reioy-
cing and thankfulness vnto God, do promise that they it here should
not stand sure and steadfast in the gates of Ierusalem, which were
wont to runne hither & thither. Truly it is that the Arke did long
continue in Sile. But because the Lord had made no promise con-
cerning that place, there could be no stablishment of faith in the hearts
of the people. And againe, because it was said of the Mount Sion
This is my rest for euermore, with Ierusalem, I haue delight therein:
the faithful being surely grounded vpon this word, were bold to

D ii.

Standing
feete what
they signifie.

say that their feete should neuer remoue againe, but stand stedfast & sure in the gates of Ierusalem and in the house of the Lord: for this standing signifieth a constant & a continuall abiding for euer. But now for as much as Christ, in whom dwelleth the fulnes of the goodhead, and which is y true Immanuel dwelleth amongst vs, we haue a farre greater cause to reioyce then the Israelites had. Therefore we may seeme vnthankful, yea blockish and senseles, if this promises I am with you vnto the end of the worlde, do not stirre vp our hearts to great ioy and gladnes, especially if we see it thankfully and with publike consent receiued of the people. For that which we rehearsed euen now concerning the rest of the Lord, is altogether fulfilled in the person of Christ, as it appeareth in the 2. chapter of Esay: His rest (saith he) shall be glorious. Where he speaketh not of the buriall of Christ (as some doe fondly imagine) but of the excellency and dignitie of the church, which should afterwards follow. The gloiy and bewtie whereof since by the great mercy of God we haue seene, let vs be thankfull thereto, and beseech him that he will make perfect that he hath begun in vs, that our feete may alwayes be standing in the courts of the Lord, in the Church and congregation of the faithfull, where we may find God, where we may heare him calling vs, teaching vs, comforting vs, and succouring vs.

Verse. 2. Ierusalem is builded as a citie where the people may come together to worship God.

This verse is an exposition or amplification of the verse that goeth before. As if he said: our feete shall stand in thy gates (I say) O Ierusalem, which flourisheth and increaseth in all felicitie. For where the word of God flourisheth, there shall the common welth prosper, according to the saying of our saviour Christ: First seeke the kingdom of God, & all things shall be ministred vnto you: and per so notwithstanding, that this saying also of our saviour remembreth alwayes true answering vnto Paule: My power is made perfect through weaknes. For albeit y world both daily bere & trouble the church many waies, yet notwithstanding y more the aduersaries go about to destroy & pluck downe, the more both the word of God flourisheth & build up. To pluck downe then, to destroy, and to ouerthrow y church is nothing else (if you consider y counsel & purpose of God, and the end that followeth thereof) but to build up, to plant

2. Cor. 12.

To pluck
downe & to
opprelle the
Church is to
build it vp.

plant, to water and to encrease the Church. The Decians, Maximines, and Domitians, those bloody and mighty tyrannes, howe cruelly went they about to abolish for euer, the name of Christ? But the word and the Church of God, as a palme tree, the more it was oppressed, the more it flourished and encreased, mangre their malice and tyranny; as the figure of the people of Israel doth declare. For so sayth Moyses: The more the Egyptians did beate ^{Exod. 11} them, the more they multiplied and grew. To this agreeth also the saying of the olde Church: that the Church is watered with the blood of Martyrs. The cause of this miraculous building is, that where so euer God is beleued and his word had in due reuerence and regard, there must needs followe a victorie, albeit the Saints be destroyed, slayne, and seeme utterly to perish: yea albeit God him selfe seeme to haue forsaken them, and with them to be oppressed and overcome. For so it is with God, that when he seemeth most weake, then is he most strong; & when he is oppressed in his Saints, then specially he liueth, triumpheth, and is exalted in them, and in diminishing he most mightely increaseth.

Of such a manner of building speaketh David also in this place: that albeit Ierusalem was compassed about with so many enemies and idolatrous religions, notwithstanding there the word of God & true religion flourished. Who then can preuaile against vs, when God is so with vs? And this is the true building of Ierusalem. To the which the Kings gathered them selues, and conspired against it, but they were suddenly diuised backe and could not preuaile. We also in these our dayes by our owne experience haue proued that the more the aduersaries of the word doe rage, the lesse they preuaile against it: yea so much the more it flourisheth and encreaseth. And what else doth Satan our perpetual aduersary bring to passe by his continuall tentations, but diuine vs to search the word, to learne to pray, to beleue, to hope, &c. Yea the trouble and oppression of the Christians is the exaltation and triumph of the Church. Let the aduersaries then doe what they list: certaine it is that y^e more we are cast downe, the more we are raised vp. For there is no power against the Lorde, Christ our captaine and our head hath a power aboue all power whereby he liueth by those that are cast downe: whereby he raiseth the dead to life, and those that are oppressed and overcome, he maketh able with ioyfull victorie to overcome. For in that he is God, it is his

Ierusalem set
in the midds
of her aduersaries, notwithstanding
mightely prospered.

The proper
office of
God.

proper office to make all things of nothing, and likewise of those things which be, to make nothing.

Thus David setteth forth the praise and commendation of Jerusalem. For what a great benefit and blessing of God is it; not onely to leaue a certain place where the people may come together to serue and worship God, but also a certaine sound of the presence of God by the publishing of his word. When he saith: This is my rest, here will I dwell, here will I speake, here shall be my word & my spirit, then all is safe: then what worke so euer it be, though in outward appearance it seeme neuer so small, it is better then all the treasures of the world: then the cutting away of the foreskin of the priuy members is an acceptable worship vnto God. To take by a straine from the earth, if God so commaunded, is a greater & a more excellent worke, and also a worship more pleasing God, then all the glittering works of the whole papacy, which haue no ground of the word of God. This the heathen vnderstood not, and therefore they contemned Jerusalem, and marueled why the people should resort thither certaine times of the yeare, rather then to other cities. Like as Naaman Cirus thought at the beginning that the waters of Damascus were no worse then the waters of Iordane: but he had no commaundement of the Lord that he shoulde wash him selfe in those waters for the cleansing of his leprosie. It is the word alone therefore that maketh a difference betwene the Church of God and the Gentiles, Papistes, and all the Antichristian rabble. By this word it iudgeth, it teacheth, it baptiseth, it distributeth the Lords supper, it comforteth, it reprobeth, it excommunicateth, &c.

Thus (I say) David extollet and magnifieth his Jerusalem: first in respect of the spirittuall building thereof, because there is the kingdom and priesthood, there is the word & worship of the Lord: then also in respect as wel of the material building, as also of those things which pertaine to the good gouernment of a city, as peace and iustice, lawes and iudgement: but principally he speaketh not of that building, and therefore he saith: It is edified as a city where all may participate together, that is, may come together to worship the Lord. For there was no other place in all the world where the people might come together to celebrate the name of the Lord, but Jerusalem alone. So that this verse is as an exposition of that place in Exod. VVhere I shall leaue a memorie of my name; there

there will I come vnto thee, &c. As if he said: that place is Ierusalem, in the which the people of God must congregate together, to heare his word, to celebrate his name: where also the Lord him selfe hath promised to dwell: whether the people do lie in all their necessities, to call vpon God for help and succoure, &c. This is the glory of Ierusalem: to the which all the glory of the worlde was not able to be compared. Therfore in S. Matthew it is called holy, & is so magnified here of the Prophet: Albeit it was afterward horribly pprofaned of the Gentiles. But why doe the people gather together in this place?

Ierusalem
the holy ci-
tie.

Vers. 4. VVhereunto the tribes, even the tribes of the Lorde goe vp for a testimony, or to testifie to Ierusalem, and to praise the name of the Lord.

This verse also conteineth in it selfe the words afore recited out of Exod. VVhere I shall put a memoriall of my name, &c. For this memoriall signifieth the whole worship of God, together with the word: that is, the preaching of the promises and the law, with the ministry of the priests, not only in the sacrifices of the law, but specially in the chiefest sacrifices of all: that is, of the celebrating & praying the name of the Lord. In the which were set forth spirituall consolations of victory against sinne and death, and also temporall, concerning the kingdom and political order. These benedictions he setteth forth when he speaketh of ascending vp, and maketh a comparison betwene Ierusalem and other cities. As if he said: Other cities may flourish with riches and power: more then this citie, but this is it to the which the tribes doe ascend: not as they doe in other nations, but the tribes of the Lord, which the Lord him selfe hath chosen to be his people aboue all other nations of the earth, and he to be their God. And here he doth not exclude the Iewes, which were of the Gentiles and did associate them selves vnto this people: for he speaketh simply of those that did ascend vp to heare the word and to inuocate the name of the Lord: as the words that followe do declare.

For a testimony vnto Israel, & to praise the name of the Lord: Whereby he signifieth no other thing but that there was a place in Ierusalem appointed of the Lord for the preaching of the word and prayer. And this is worthy to be noted, that Dauid speaketh

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D. iiii.

preach the
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of no moe kindes of sacrifice but of these two onely. He saith not that the temple was appoynted of God that sacrifices should there be slaine, incense offered, oblations made, and every man shewe him selfe thankfull vnto God with his gifts. Of these things he maketh no mention at all: albeit they were commaunded to be done no where else but in the temple. Onely he speaketh of preaching the word and thanks giuing; or prayer. And albeit he reponeth not these sacrifices, yet he plainly declareth that þe summe of true religion is, to heare the Lorde when he speaketh vnto vs, and to inuocate and praise his holy name.

To testifie
what it sig-
nifieth.

This is it for the which Dauid so highly praiseth his temple, (which we also ought specially to beholde in our temples) that the tribes doe ascend vp thither to testifie vnto Ierusalem: that is, to teach and to heare the worde of God. For so he meaneth by this word [testifie] as the Hebrewes haue many words to signifie the ministry of the word and doctrine. To bitter, to promise, to confesse, to lute, to iudge, to testifie, to teach, all these words in effect doe signifie as much as to preach or publish the word. The preachers are witnesses to the people of that they knowe: which he is not sene nor felt, but beleued. They are also witnesses which beare the word. For when they beare it they testifie or beare witness against the deuill, the kingdom of the world, sinne and death: also against adulterers, murderers, theues, false brethren, &c. for the glory of God, the aduancing of his kingdom, chastitie, innocencie, charitie, &c. For God is inuisible, and therefore when they are heard which teach and preach vnto vs the word of God, then God him selfe is heard. For he can not be heard but by witnesses, and (as S. Paule calleth them) by his messengers. That which is taught them in the Church is inuisible and absente, and therefore can be apprehended by no other meanes, but by the testimony of the word. So the whole Gospell is a testimony: for it speaketh of things absente, and it is nothing else but the preaching of faith. This I speake for the simple and ignoiant concerning this word [testifie].

This is the cause then why Dauid so reioyceth, namely that his Ierusalem was builded to this ende, that the worde of faith might there be preached, whereby þe people might learne to know what the will of God is, what he intendeth to do with his people, what punishment and plagues he threatneth to the wicked. And

this

this preaching is the testimony which David here speaketh of, made unto the children of Israell gathered together in this place: whereby they were knowne to be the peculiar and chosen people of God from all other nations, as he saith in an other psalme: He hath not so dealt with every nation. Wherefore we also haue great cause to acknowledge the rich blessing of God; that his word of God is now purely & sincerely preached amongst vs; as it was then in Ierusalem, and the sweete promises of the Gospell sounding in the eares & consciences of the godly to their singular comfort and consolation: also the threatenings of God published, whereby the wicked are called to repentance and the godly kept in the feare of God and mortification of the olde man through the assistance of the holy Ghost, whom the father through Christ and for Christes sake, poureth vpon them abundantly which willingly and gladly receiue this testimony.

This is one part then of the true worship of God, to learne the way how to worship God in such sort as best pleaseth him, which consisteth in teaching of the word & hearing of God when he speaketh vnto vs by his witnesses, and therefore the Deuill desireth nothing so much as to hinder his preaching & hearing of the word. For this cause he rayseth vp, (as ye heard in the first psalme) lying lippes and deceitful tongues: he stirreth vp the worlde with sword and power to oppresse the godly, and euen in our selues he goeth about to deface this kinde of seruice and worship of God by our deuillish contempt and loathing of the same. But contrariwise, to build Churches and gorgeously to decke them for the maintenance of masses, oblations, false worship and idolatrie, all this he can abide well enough: for by these thinges he knoweth that his strength is not diminished, nor his power weakened. But when the word of God is preached concerning remission of sinnes, the righteousness that cometh by Christ and life everlasting, this doctrine destropereth his kingdom. This causeth him to rage and to seeke by all meanes possible, how he may hinder the course of the gospell.

The other part of the worship of God is to praise the name of the Lord. This David maketh the second kinde of worship, when he commendeth his Ierusalem. And here againe note that he speaketh working of the sacrifices of the law: for albeit the work not commend them, (as I said before) yet he reckoneth them but as

To giue
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word.

chasse in comparison of the word and the fruite which followeth thereof, which is thanks giving. And if he had named the sloping of sacrifices, every man had not bene able to serue God with that kinde of worshippe. Therefore he requirerh nothing else but that which they were able to do without great charges, which yet notwithstanding they few did. He did not condemne the building of the temple which afterwards should be done by his sonne Sathion, but did earnestly desire the same, and the cause why he did desire is here you see, namely that first the name of God might there be preached, and then that God might there accept the prayers of his people, with praise and thanks giving for his benefites received.

Hitherto we haue heard how the Prophete extollet and magnifieth the incomparable gift & benefite of God, the word I meane, with thanks and praise unto God for the same. For that is a benefite and blessing in dede which is knowne and acknowledged so to be. All the world, as we see, is full & euery glutted with the benefites of God: notwithstanding it remaineth still in such blindness that it knoweth them not to be the gifts of God, and therefore it taketh and useth them no otherwise then hogges doe their draffe & stull. But Dauid seeth that God had giuen him a kingdom, wherein the pure word of God and true religion flourished. This great benefite he acknowledgeth, and therefore he so reioyseth and magnifieth his Ierusalem, as a place appointed by the Lords owne mouth where the people might come together to heare the word of God and to giue thanks unto God for his benefites: out of the which place it was not possible to find God. The Gentiles, because they had not the word, nor this hearing whereof Dauid here speaketh, could not find God. Hereby we may see how horrible a thing it is, to contemne and to loth the word. For what can be moze horrible then that man a weake creature, nothing but earth & dust, should so lift vp him selfe in pride, that when the maiestie of God speaketh & most louingly inuiterh him to heare, he will not heare. And yet we see that there is nothing moze common then this impietie, this horrible contempt, this deuillish lothing of the worde of God amongst all sortes of men. The cause is, for that we heare not the Lord speaking now, into vs in his speciality, as he spake in the mount Sinai, at what time the people were astonished & trembled at the terrible voyce of the Lord, & yet how soone had they forgotten the Lord, and murmured both against the Lord and against Moises.

Thus

Thus in his State he speaketh no more, but he speaketh nowe vnto vs by men, and therefore he is concerned. Horrible it is that Sodome was burnt by with fire from heauen. Horrible it is also that the whole world was destroyed with water. Howeouer & daily examples of impiety and wickednes, as murder, whozedom, &c. are such that they can not be heard without horzour & trembling. But how horrible so euer all these things be, yet is it much more horrible to contemne God when by his word he speaketh vnto vs: which al the world doth at this day, not only they which persecute & woꝝd with open tyanny, but such also as are euen amongst vs, & at & beginning seemed to receiue this doctrine wth great reioycing.

Wherefoꝛe Dauid exhoꝛteth vs in this psalme, with thankfulness to acknowledge this singular benefite of the woꝝd, and to beware of the horrible contempt thereof. Howe much better is it to suffer pestilence, famine and the sword: howe much more tolerable foꝛ Dauid to become both an adulterer and a murder, so that there remaine a reuerence to the woꝝd (which repentance necessarily byingeth with it) then to fall so farre as to contemne the woꝝd? Foꝛ this is to heape wꝛath vpon wꝛath: like as it is to heape grace vpon grace with Dauid, to hold fast the woꝝd, and withall to acknowledge the great benefite thereof.

To be byiese, like as there is no greater ioy and felicitie to the good, then to heare and to know the voyce of God speaking vnto them, offering grace, peace, remission of sinnes and life euerylasting: so can there be to them no greater crosse then the contempt of the woꝝd. Foꝛ what doest thou else but contemne God him selfe, yea crucifie againe the sonne of God, and treade thy Sauiour vnder thy feete, when thou contemnest the woꝝd of God, which foꝛ thy saluation, is reuelled & offered vnto thee? No mortal man can abide such intolerable contempt, as the Lord our God continually suffereth. Foꝛ he is patient, and would that we should conuert and repent: but he payeth home at the length, as we may see by the fall of the Synagoge and the destruction of Ierusalem. Foꝛ Christ plainly sheweth that the cause of such horrible calamities was, foꝛ that they did not knowe the time of their visitation. Let vs learne then, by these examples, what a great blessing it is to heare the Lorde our God speaking vnto vs, and as a tender mother with her chyldren, most louingly talking with vs: Foꝛ this is it which Dauid meaneth when he speaketh of the

ascending hyppie of the tribes to Ierusalem and to the house of the Lord, to testifie vnto Israel, that is, there to teache and to heare the word of the Lord, and to giue thanks vnto him for his benefites. This is that citie therfore that is worthy to be decked with all precious ornaments. This is the people of whom our Saviour Christ sayth: Blessed are they that heare the word of God & keepe it with a good heart. Here is the kingdom of heauen, here is the true paradise, here are the open gates to euerlasting life.

Verse. 5. Forther are the seates of iudgement: euen the seates of the house of Dauid.

This may be vnderstand both of the ciuill gouernment and also of the Church, but specially it is spoken of the church. And here note that iudgement is taken for doctrine. As if he sayd: This is the glozy of this people, that in this place is stablished the chayre and seat in the which the word of the Lord is published & taught, weake consciences comforted and instructed, and the way of saluation layd open vnto men. Likewise in the first psalme he sayth: The wicked shall not stand in iudgement: that is, they doe not perseuer and abide in the doctrine of faith, and therfore they are as chaffe which the winds scattereth from the face of the earth. The Church of Rome wil now be called the seate of iudgement, and euen there also the Lord had once his seate: but nowe through wicked doctrine and damnable idolatrie it is the seate of Satan, the chayre of pestilence and a denne of wicked spirites. This is then the true sense and meaning of these words: In this place the word of the Lord is fulfilled, promising that he wil leaue a memoriall of his name. For here he is to be founde, here he dwelleth. Therfore here is life, here is saluation, here is remission of sinnes; here is the tyranny of Satan vanquished, &c. For all these he meaneth when he nameth the seates of iudgement, that is, the administration of truth, the ministerie of faith, the voyce of Gods maiestie speaking vnto his people. For (as I sayd) iudgement signifieth here founde & sincere doctrine concerning grace, faith, works, magistrates, ciuill ordinances, &c. All here this doctrine is, there are the seates of iudgement. As we also may nowe glozy of our Churches for the sincere doctrine wherby men are truly taught out of Gods word concerning grace, sinne, righteousnes, faith, works, obedience.

obedience to parents and magistrats. This doctrine is as it weare, a bright shining sunne, from whence the Churches doe receive their light: And contrarywise where the word of God is not, there are the seates of iniquitie and of Satan him selfe: For the worde maketh the seate, and not the seate the worde, as the Antichristian Church of Rome most damnably teacheth.

Now, whereas with a repetition he addeth: Euen the seates of the house of David, this is the cause for that he looketh to the promise made vnto David, namely that the seate of the tabernacle or the temple should be builded by his sonne Salomon in Ierusalem, where iudgement should be exercised, that is to say, mens consciences comforted, terrified, instructed by the word, and also because the Lord would that Davids posteritie should reigne after him, vntill the eternitie of the heauenly Ierusalem should be reueiled.

Here is the image of the heauenly Ierusalem also to be considered. The earthly Ierusalem was builded on a hill, so that there was no accesse vnto it but by ascending vpyward. The celestial Ierusalem is builded in heauen, whereunto none can come, but by mounting vpy with alacrity of spirite, out of this earthly mansion and corruptible life, and therefore no earthly and carnall men can come there. The earthly Ierusalem was builded as a citie for the people of God, where they might meete together to serue & worship God. Likewise the celestial Ierusalem is builded for 12 tribes of the Lord, the elect and faithfull people, there to meete together, first in this life by faith, and afterwarde by eternall societie both in soule & body. This Ierusalem Saint Paule meaneth when he saith: If ye be risen againe with Christe, seek for those thinges which are aboue. And the authoꝝ of the Epistle to the Hebrewes, admonisheth vs that by faith we are already come to this heauenly Ierusalem. Ye are come (saith he) to the mount Sion and to the ciue of the liuing God, the celestially Ierusalem, and to the company of innumerable Angells, and to the congregation of the iust boine, which are written in heauen, & to God the iudge of all, and to the spirites of iust and perfect men, and to Iesus the Mediatour of the newe testament, &c. The earthly Ierusalem celebrated the name of the Lord with praise and thanks giuing in the congregation. In the heauenly Ierusalem the Angells and company of holy spirites doe praise and shall praise the Lord for

The image of the heauenly Ierusalem.

Colo. 3.

Heb. 12.

euermore. The earthly Ierusalem had in it the state of David. The heauenly Ierusalem hath the throne of Christ the sonne of God, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, of whom David was a figure: The earthly Ierusalem had tribunall seates where all things were iudged with equitie. The celestially Ierusalem hath the tribunall seate where iudgement is & shall be most iustly pronounced vpon the vniuersall world, and vpon all men that either haue beene, be, or shall be. The Lord graunt & with an inuincible faith we may moue vnto this celestially Ierusalem, & citie of God where are such toyces & felicitie as neither eye hath seene, nor eare hath heard, nor tongue can tel, nor yet heart can thinke,

Vers. 6. Pray for the peace of Ierusalem, let them prosper that loue thee.

To pray for the peace of Ierusalem, is to pray for the safetie, prosperitie and welfare of the Church of God, that Satan haue no power to hinder the course and fruite of the word. David sawe, first in spirit this horrible contempt of the word and ministry: & moreover he saw that this glorious gift could not be preserved by mans diligence. Therefore he goeth about here to stirre vpp the hartes of men to pray for the preservation of this gift. As if he said: Here is the Lords owne seate and throne of iudgement: notwithstanding how few doe reuerence and regard it as they should doe? Yea, the greatest part of the world hateth it, and wisheth the subuersion thereof. Therefore I exhort you. O ye kille stock, to honour and reuerence this seate, to pray for the peace thereof, louingly to salute it, and to say: The Lord out of Sion blesse thee, &c. So long as this citie flourisheth, ye haue & Lord him self speaking, saying, giuing victorie against all the assaules of Satan, against sinne, the terror of conscience, &c. What cause haue ye then to pray for the prosperitie of this citie, whereby ye may such benificially benefites? When the church of God doth not prosper, it cannot go wel with any perticular member thereof. No maruell then why David so earnestly exhorteth all the faithfull to pray for the peace and prosperitie of the Church. Therefore if we will pray as we ought to do, we must first and principally commend vnto God the common state of the church. For he that seeketh his owne welfare and neglecteth the state and prosperitie of the Church, doth not only grieve

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him selfe to be voyd of all sense and zeale of true piety, but also the prayers which he maketh for himselfe are in vaine & profite him nothing.

Let them prosper that loue thee. He witherth vnto them which loue the word and reuerence this seat, that God would blesse them with all maner of blessing & felicitie. And this prayer is very necessary. For we see daily, howe the true professors of the Gospell are in daunger by the ministers of Satan, the enemies of God & his truth, on euery side, which could be content rather to haue the Turke to reigne ouer them, yea the deuill him selfe and all the furies of hell, then to see vs prosper, and the Gospell to flourish, least their cursed workes of darknes and infidelitie should appeare vnto the world.

Vers. 7. Peace be within thy walls and prosperitie within thy pallaces.

Nowe that the Prophet hath exhorted all men to pray for the peace and prosperitie of Ierusalem, he turneth vnto the citie, and doth not onely wish wel vnto it, but also he sheweth vnto other how they should pray for it. The summe whereof is that true religion may flourish: the ministerie and ministers of the word may be defended against the false prophets, that concord may be maintained amongst the pastors and preachers of the word, and that the ciuill gouernment may prosper. How necessary this prayer is, experience daily teacheth vs. For where these 2. things are, namely concord in the Church, and peace in the ciuill state, there can no good thing be lacking, & therefore the deuill so busily labourerh to trouble the peace of them both. This was the cause why there was such a multitude of false prophets, rebells, & seditious persons amongst this people, as h storie do testify. Wherefore Dauid being taught by his owne experience, prayeth for these 2. things: without the which the world is nothing els but a wild desert.

Example hereof may be vnto vs h late times wherein we liued vnder the Pope before this light of the Gospell beganne to shyne. For then, when the sound doctrine of the word was lacking, what could the Pope & all his shauelings doe? What one herse did they rightly vnderstand throughout the whole yslender? Wherby it came to passe that they were not able to resist most manifest impieties, which by the strong & mighty delusions of the deuill overflowed h

world, as in pilgrimages, where they maintained most damnable idolatries and caused the people to adoe the works of their owne handes, and if any man spake against them, he was by and by taken and burnt as an heretike. So true is it, that when the word is once lost, the world remaineth in most horrible darkenes and can doe nothing else but abuse the giftes of God, and so falleth to most detestable impietie or else to desperation. This Dauid seeth, and therefore he prayeth so earnestly for the prosperitie of Ierusalem, for faithfull pastors in the Church, and godly Princes in the politike state.

Verse. 8. For my brethren and neighbours sakes, I will wish thee now prosperitie.

Here Dauid sheweth the cause, as he doeth also in the verse following, why he prayeth thus for Ierusalem. As if he sayd: In that I wish that peace may be in thee o Ierusalem, in that I desire thy prosperitie and welfare, I doe it for my brethren and neighbours sakes, that is, for my fellowes and companions in faith and religion. And here in his owne person he sheweth the common complaint of all those that rule either in the church, or in the common weale, or in families, which is, that the greater part of men is euer peruerse and wicked. The godly pastour when he goeth about with great care & diligence to refoyme the corrupt life and wickednes of the people, seeth notwithstanding that the moze part stil remaineth peruerse & intractable. The Magistrate traueling with like care and diligence in his calling, findeth the people disobedient & incorrigible. Likewise is it in household gouernment. What faithfull seruice shalt thou finde euen amongst those whom thou thoughtest to haue found most true and faithfull? Hereof it cometh that many are discomfited and utterly discouraged, seeing so litle fruite and successe to ensue of their godly trauels. Notwithstanding we see it can not otherwise be: For Satan our perpetuall enemy seeketh neither night nor day to stirre vpp disord and peruerse opinions in the Church: in the ciuill state stubborne and disobedient persons, in household gouernment, negligent and faithfull families. Here we must looke with Dauid, not to the greater part, which is euer wicked, but to our brethren and neighbours. So doth Paule in the 3. Timoth. 3. For the elects sake I sorrowne

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Verse. 9.

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suffeyne and suffer all things, sayth he. For if it were not for their
sakes, who would willingly take vpon him the office of a pastour
or preacher in the Church? These, the elect I meane, the Lorde
hath here and there sparred among the wicked, as p[re]cious stones
in the middes of the earth. Therfore thou must not think to preach
to these only, which were to be wished: but that can not be because
they are mixed with the vngodly multitude. Likewise, when thou
art called to be a ciuill magistrate or a gouernour of a household,
thou shalt not finde all to be p[re]cious stones, gold or siluer: but let
it suffice thee if in a whole multitude (as it chaunceth in mynes)
thou find but one veine of siluer, or amongst a great deale of earth
but one p[re]cious stone. For the greatest part in the Church is he-
reticall & godles: the least part in the ciuill state obedient & louing
of vertue. Hereof it commeth then, that all things are full of trouble
to the godly pastour, the Magistrate, the householder, because the
wicked with such successe contemne and disobey all godly orders.

Notwithstanding, thou man of God, stand in thy calling, do thy
dutie, pray for peace, exhort, counsel, reppare those whom thou
hast charge ouer. For since that now by the word of God & church
is somewhat purged of false religion, superstition and idolatry, &
the Magistrates better instructed of their dutie and office, Satan
rageth as a strong armed man, keeping his house when a stronger
commeth. Be strong therfore in these tentations, and think that,
as these things are not begun by the power of Satan, so though
he rage against the same neuer so much, thou must not be discoura-
ged or slacke the Lords busines: but first serue the Lord and then
thy brethren and neighbours. For their sakes the Churches must
be instructed, the common wealth governed: not for the worlds
sake and the vngodly multitude, for it is not worthie that a cheefe
should be hanged, an adulterer or murderer put to death: but the
Lord in heauen and our brethren & neighbours in earth are wor-
thy of this seruice, as he addeth in the verse following. Thus I re-
pounde this verse to be a consolation for pastours, ciuill Magi-
strates and gouernours of families, against the multitude of the
wicked, and the troubles which by them the godly doe sustayne.

Verse. 9. Because of the house of the Lorde our God I will pro-
cure thy wealth.

This is an other cause why he prayeth for the peace and pro-

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ſpirit of Ieruſalem, ſoꝛ that the Sanctuary of the Lord and the ſeat of true religion being ſtabliſhed in that cite, if it prospered not, the worſhip and ſervice of God could not there continue. As if he ſayd: The Lord our God hath ſtabliſhed his ſeat in thee O Ieruſalem; and in the middes of thee hath he ſet vp his worſhip: For the which cauſe I loue thee, and thinke thee woꝛthy of all proſperitie.

But why doth hee adde hereunto: Our God? Becauſe God had choſen this nation to be as his own peculiar people. And this alſo was the cauſe why David ſo loued them, and was not diſcomforted with theſe troubles which he ſoꝛ their ſakes ſuſteyned. both in the Church and in the ciuill gouernment: but being choſen to be a King, and a Prophet to this people, he conſtantly endured all troubles, and herewithall comforted him ſelfe, that firſt he ſerued the Lord his God, & then his brethren, and was not an vnpoſſible ſeruant, but fruitfull vnto God that he might be gloriſied; and to his neighbour and brother that he might be ſaued.

Let vs likewiſe pray for the welfare of our brethren, and for the houſe of the Lord with David, who as this Pſalme ſheweth, did wel vnderſtand the power and glory of the word, and therefore he neither giueth thanks nor yet reioiceth for the abundance of gold and ſiluer (which notwithstanding he lacked not) but for the word and true worſhip of the Lord. Where theſe two are not lacking, all other incommodities may eaſily be borne. For if we haue the Lord abiding with vs, if we maintaine his word and his true ſervice, and ſeek the ſaluation of our brethren, what can we deſire moꝛe? But where the word & true worſhip of God is not regarded, there is no God, no mercy, no ſaluation, neither doth there any thing elſe remaine but the curſed multitude which ſhall be damned in hell. Therefore Dauid exhorteth vs in this Pſalme about all things to reuerence the word; and by faithfull prayer to ſeek the aduancement thereof: Alſo to giue thanks vnto God for peace and true preachers which gouerne the Church according to his word: ſoꝛ where theſe things are not, there muſt needs be trouble and vexation, vnquietnes of conſcience, murder, adultery & ſuch other horrible ſinnes, which the Lord turne away from our Churches, & preſerue that poore remnant emonges the damnable multitude, which ſerue and worſhip him according to his word.

By theſe two latter verſes we ate admoniſhed, firſt how euery

Chriſt

Christ amongst to regard him which is his fellow in faith and religion, that is to say, as his brother and neighbour: Then also why he ought to haue a hartie loue and zeale to the Church and congregation of the faithful. For my brethren saith David, and for my neighbours. And againe, for the house of the Lord our God. These two thinges ought to be considered in the Church of Christ. In it are our brethren and neighbours, in it is the house of God, yea rather it is the house of God it selfe, in the which are the children of God and true brethren. O happy is he, and a right Christian in deede, which beeing indued with the true knowledge and faith of Christ, and also with that brotherly loue which is accompanying to the spirit of the children of God, can vnfeinedly and hartely say: For my brethren and neighbours, and for the house of the Lord our God I both seeke and I wish the prosperitie and welfare of the Church of God.

The 123. Psalm.

I lift vp mine eyes vnto thee, &c.

This Psalm (as ye see) is but short, and therefore a very fitte example to shew the force of prayer not to consist in many words, but in feruency of spirit. For great and weighty matters may be compassed in few words, if they proceede from the spirit & the vnspokeable groanings of the heart, especially when our necessity is such as will not suffer any long prayer: Every prayer is long enough if it be feruent & proceede from a heart that understandeth the necessitie of the Saints: not in such small matters as the world counteth great and weightie, as pouerty, losse of goods, and such other worldly incommodities, but when the Church is oppressed with violence and tyranny, when the name of God is prophand with wicked doctrine, or if there be any thing else that either hindreth the glory of God or the saluation of soules, these perils can not well be uttered in prayer, and therefore the prayer of the faithful is then most effectuous, when with griefe of heart and affliction of spiritie they see these things, and earnestly thinke vpon them.

So this Psalm is a prayer against the mighty, rich, and welth of the world, which either cruelly molest and depe, or proudly deride and contempe the good, as the last verse doth declare. And

E ii.

The argument of the Psalm.

A breife prayer in necessity carrieth power with it.

these are not onely such as p̄ferre wicked doctrine, superstition & idolatry before the vnderstaṁd word of God: but euen such also as gloꝝy in the word and sound doctrine and will be counted louers & fauourers of the Gospell, and partakers with vs of the name and gloꝝy of Chꝛist. Of such there was a great number amongst the people of Israel. For they had the lawe, sacrifices, and ceremonies instituted by Moyses according to þ̄ word of God. They had great plentie of p̄phets and godly teachers: yet how they vsed them, the stoꝝyes doe declare. When Elisha sent the sonne of a p̄phet vnto Ichu: the other said: VVherefore commeth this made fellow vnto thee? The p̄salmes also & p̄earchings of the p̄phets concerning faith and true righteousnes before God, doe shew that they were contemned and derided of the multitude, yea & condemned as heretikes because they seemed not to attribute so much to sacrifices & ceremonies of þ̄ law as they should do. Likewise Dauid was counted a seditious fellow, a rebel, a traitor, and charged with ambition and greedy desire to reigne. And afterwards when he went about to bꝛing the arke of the Lord to Ierusalem, & with a good and a zealous mind expꝛessed his ioy: Michol his wife reueiled him with these words: Oh how glorious was the King of Israel this day: which was vncouered in the eyes of the maidens of his seruants, as a foole vncouereth him selfe. Now, we can not thinke that onely Michol do thus slanderously speake of þ̄ kings doings: but there were (no doubt) ocher also in the court, men both of wisdom & dignitie which iudged the same. For what soeuer he be that professeth & loueth the word vnfainedly, & zealously seeketh the gloꝝy of God, he shal be iudged and called of the cursed world & worldlings both a foolish & a mad man. That it hath bene alwayes so, the stoꝝyes do declare, & also these our daies do witnes the same.

Wherefoꝛe this p̄salme setteth before our eyes a goodly example: that foꝛ as much as we are compelled to see & suffer this contempt & despite of the pꝛoude & scornful, we should pray with Dauid agaynst al such: that is, first agaynst the pope & his whole kingdom of faces, foꝛ they doe not onely pꝛoudly contemne vs, but also cōdemne vs. Then also agaynst false bꝛethꝛen, such as in our churches lue in al carnall & godles securitie, and albeit they will seeme to be no enemies but fr̄iēds vnto þ̄ gospel, yet either deride oꝛ mocke þ̄ true professors therof. Agaynst al such this p̄salme is written foꝛ the troubled & afflicted childꝛen of God, which are counted of

4 Reg. 9.

2 Reg. 6.

the world neither heretofore nor hereafter, nor the fooler and obiects. But this consolation they haue, that seeing the holy Ghost in this psalme doth teach them how to pray in these distresses, they shall be heard, and though they be here contemned and counted the out-sweepings of the earth, they shall be made glorious in the kingdom of God.

Verse 1. I lift vppe mynne eyes vnto thee which dwellest in the heauens. *Verse 2.* Myne eyes are vnto thee which dwellest in the heauens.

This is a vehement groining of a troubled mind, looking about and seeking every way for comfort and succour, but none could be found. Whether then shall I misser able man be? (saith he) in this distresse I haue strength to withstand mine enemies I haue none. Of wisdom and counsell, being compassed with such a multitude of aduersaries, I am utterly desitute. To thee therefore I come, O my God: To thee I lift up mine eyes, which dwellest in the heauens. Note that he that is called the habitation of God, not because he is there contained (as as the heauens are his house, so is the earth his footstool): but because he doth from thence more manifestly shew the maiestie of his diuinitie. And when to euer he hath at any time done vpon the earth by revelations, visions or oracles, he seemed to haue spoken from heauen. From whence also haue come the most terrible and seuer punishments of the wicked: as of the first world by the flood; of the Sodomites by the burning sulphur of fire which was stone; of the Egyptians, by the mixed with fire: of the Amorites by the raving of stones from heauen. And hereof come these sayings: He that dwelleth in the

A vehement groining of the hart, destitute of all comfort.

Psalm 2.

Psalm 116.

Tim 6.

Luke 9.

heavens shall laugh them to scorne. The Lorde looked downe from heauen. The Lord hath prepared his seat in heauen. Our God is in heauen and doth what soeuer he will. Which dwelleth in the highes hath none against him. Therefore we reade that Christ commonly when he prayed, or when he gaue thanks to his father, looked vp to heauen: And when he departed hence into his father, he was seene to ascend vp into the heauens. These things were spoken to this ende that we may knowe that God our father is not earthly, inuisionable, or corruptible but the Lord and inhabitour of heauen (as a place without all corruption), and therefore a most meete habitation for him: almighty and ruling over

E iii.

all, everlasting, incorruptible, filling all things, pricing all things.

The prophet also saith, *God heere the inhabitour of heauen*, to signifie that the earth is full of the psonde and stormfully, and that the goodly are trodden vnder soote of those that dwell vpon the earth, and are counted the outweepings of the world, and therefore he seeth none besides the Lord and inhabitour of heauen of whom he may looke for helpe and succour. The great daunger whereof the Prophet complayneth, is herein exprest, in that he looking about on every side and seeking for succour, could find none to helpe him but onely the inhabitour of heauen. These thinges make the temptation much more greivous and terrible, and therefore he prayeth with such voyces in his temptation as perhaps he at that time did not perfectly vnderstand, as *Samuel Paule* also saith: *VVe vnderstand not what we pray. The Spirit knoweth and vnderstandeth what these voyces mean, vnto man can not conceiue the power thereof in the time of his temptation, whyles faith is infirme and is per in the doubt.* But when our petition is granted, prayer heard, then faith hath her force, and we haue more perfect wisdom. Standing both of the temptation and also of the prayer which we therein used. *What is stamped ind : (slott) vol 2, p. 100, 101*

The Prophet therefore in this verse setteth the inhabitour of heauen against the inhabitants of the earth, and conceiveth comfort and courage, that albeit the world is great and mighty, yet God is more mighty. This is the meaning of the prophet in this verse. And albeit the voyces be thus simple, yet are they full of consolation to him that belieueth. The spirit which ministrereth these voyces and thereth bypeth these groanings in the heartes of the afflicted, knoweth with what maiestie and power they are spoken.

Vers. 2. Behold, as the eyes of seruants looke vnto the hands of their maisters, and as the eyes of a mayden vnto the hand of her milkes, so our eyes waite vpon the Lord our God, vntill he haue mercy vpon vs.

Here the prophet setteth forth by a similitude the nature of trippietie. As if he sayd: Great is our affliction, and yet the Lord pprolongeth his helpe, neither easing our miserie, nor reueing our wrong. He suffereth the cruel, the ppronde and the scornful to reas

be under foote, and to prosper in our sight. This delay is tedious & greivous unto vs. How much longer we will not murmur or become impatient in such our afflictions, but as good seruants in their distresse looke to the hand, that is, for help and succour at the hand of their masters & mistresses; so will we attend vpon h Lord our God until he haue pittie vpon vs. Thus we see that the Lord sometimes deferreth his helpe, neither shewing how nor when he will help, but leauing his Saints in such perplexitie as though he had no regard either of the time or of the manner of their deliuerance so that they seeme to hang (as it were) in the middes betwene heauen and earth. These things are greivous and exceedingly encrease the temptation. Therefore we must lay sure hold on this consolation which the Prophet here setteth forth, that our temptation shall haue an ende but not as we would, lest we seeme to appoint the time and manner of our deliuerance, which h Lord reserueth to him self alone.

God sometimes prolongeth his help in temptation.

And here is an example set forth vnto vs, patiently to wait vpon the Lord in the time of trouble, to be instant in prayer, and neuer to let our hands fall, or turne our eyes from the Lord; but constantly to perseuere in sure hope & expectation of his gracious deliuerance, and of his helping hand to be present with vs in our necessities; whereof our Saviour Christ also warneth vs in the Gospel of the woman and the vnrightheous Iudge, who although he neither feared God nor man, yet because this woman neuer ceased to call vpon him, he was compelled to heare her cause. For if the worst man be not yet so wicked, but he may be ouercome with instant and continuall prayer, what shall we not hope to obtaine at Gods hand, which willingly offereth him selfe to heare our prayers, and also commaundeth vs to pray: yea and is more ready to graunt our petitions than we are to aske. For in that he differreth his help, he doth so not because he will not heare vs, but to exercise and steepe vpon our faith, and to teach vs that the wayes whereby he can and will deliuer vs are so manifold & marvellous, that we are neuer able to conceiue them. Therefore let vs thinke that the thing which we aske is not denied but deferred, & assure our selves that we are not neglected because of this delay. The patient abiding of the afflicted (saith David in an other Psalm) shall not perish: yea the Lord will not lose the glory of his name which David in the same Psalm acknowledgeth vnto him, namely that he is a helpe in time of need.

The patience of the faithful.

And here is to be noted by the words, that the holy Ghost com-
meth with the government of households and families in this place,
and signifieth that to serve is a vocation which pleaseth him: what
be done in faith: For seruantes are here mentioned vnto the com-
fort of all good seruantes, and in them is commended, not onely
their patience but also the confidence and trust which they haue in
the goodnes of their masters, especially trusting with patient car-
rying to finde mercy and fauour in their sight in time of neede.
But in deede Dauid speaketh here of better seruantes: then are
commonly seene at this day: for there is no kind of people more
deceitful, negligent and stubborne, even when there is great cause
of sharpe and seuerer correction. Wherefore let all such as will be
counted good seruantes, remember the example and rule set forth
here by the holy Ghost, and obserue of all good seruantes: which
is, that they are not froward and stubborne, but patiently endure
all things and in the worst of time and faithfull seruantes, hauing
alwayes a watchfull eye to the hand of their masters.

The humil-
tie of the
faithfull.

And further note how humbly the faithfull thinke of them selues
in the sight of God. They are called and chosen to this paginitie, to
be the buyers and children of God, and are exalted above the An-
gels; and yet notwithstanding they count them selues no better in
Gods sight then seruantes. They say not here: behold, like as
children toke to the hand of their fathers, but as seruantes to the
hand of their masters. This is the humilitie and modestie of the
godly, it is so farre of that hereby they lose the dignitie of Gods
children so: the which they are called, that by this meane it is
made to them more sure and certaine.

Whereouer here is to be obserued that Dauid sayth not simply:
VVe lift vp our eyes to the Lord, but he addeth moreouer: to the
Lord our God: that is to say, that God which hath reuealed him
selfe so, as in his word: for other wise he might not our God. The
gods of the Gentiles which were devised by mens imaginations,
are called gods: but he is the true God and none but he, which
hath declared him selfe to vs in his word and promised in the same
that he will be our God, &c. The Papistes haue deuised vnto
them selues a seruice and worship of God contrary to the seruice
of God, and therefore they worship not the true God in the same
fashion of their owne heart: yet they possesse the riches of mans
fashioned with mans handes, for the almighty creator of the world
and

of earth. But our God is he, not whom we haue deuised, but which hath paynted and set out him selfe in his Scriptures, how and by what meanes he will be serued and worshipped. It is our God because he serueth oftentimes to estrange him selfe from vs, and to haue no care of vs, the wicked doe shunne and forsake, and seeke helpe of Peter and Paule, and many times of Satan through sorcery and witchcraft and other deuillish meanes, thinking (because God prolongeth his helpe) to finde thereby more speedye succour. But thus our God is wont to deale with vs: first (as is sayd) to proue and exercise vs, and so to bring vs to the knowledge of our selues, that we may see our owne weakenes and frailty, which are so readie to be ledde away from him: then also to bring vs to the knowledge of him, whereby we may see both how willing he is, and also how able by farre better meanes to helpe vs then mans heart can conceiue.

¶ *Verse. 3.* Haue mercy vpon vs O Lord, haue mercy vpon vs, for we haue suffered too much contempt.

¶ Here may we see that the godly doe not onely feele their owne crosse, but the affliction of other also is to them a great crosse: and as they suffer together, so they cry vnto God for helpe and succour as well for other as for them selues. Yea the common calamitie of their brethren is to them a greater crosse then their owne.

¶ Haue mercy vpon vs, &c. This repetition as it both declares a great vehemencie and feruentnes of spirite in the afflicted crying vnto God for helpe and deliuerance: so it sheweth their affliction and calamitie to be exceeding greuous. For we haue suffered too much contempt. He sayd before that the godly being brought to extreme miserie by the tyranny and oppression of the wicked, did lift vp their eyes to God for helpe and succour. Nowe he sheweth also what despite and reproch they suffered of the proud and scornfull. Whereby it appeareth that the vngodly sought, not only with crueltie and oppression, but also with despite, contempt and ignominy to tread, as it were, vnder foote the children of God. He saith not onely we suffer contempt, but we are filled with contempt and ignominy, being a similitude taken of a vessel, which is filled so full that it can containe no more. Thus the children of God do not burthout at the first into these groanings and greuous complaints

when so euer they are contemned and despised, but patiently suffer in hope that God will at the length ease their miserie; untill they be filled with all manner of despite contempt, and scornning of the wicked, whereby they are compelled to cry vnto God doubting their complaint, as followeth in the next verse.

Verse 4. Our soule is filled too full of the mocking of the wealthy, and of the despitefulness of the proude.

When the goodly are not onely oppressed with iniuries, hated and despised: but also mocked and scorned of the wicked, there can be to them no greater misery. And this is it that they specially here complaine of, as of all their calamities the most grieuous. The cause why he saith that the wealthy and proude doe so spitefully sette them selues against the Church of God, is for that they which are of power and authoritie in the world, are alwayes wont to despise and contemne the goodly: which doe so much esteeme the glozy, wealth and prosperitie of this worlde, that they regard nothing at all the spirituall kingdom of Christ: yea the more they rise in wealth and dignitie, the more their pride encreaseth. This place teacheth then that it is no straunge or newe thing if the children of God be contemned of the children of this worlde which abound in wealth and riches. And it is not without good cause that here the wealthy are also called proude: for wealth and prosperity maketh men proude, the children of this worlde and worlde linges I meane. For Dauid and many others were also rich, and yet they were so broken with afflictions and so exercised both within and without, that they could haue no such pleasure or delight in their wealth and worldly prosperitie whereby they might waxe proude or fall into securitie. But the case of the wicked is farre ootherwise: for their riches, wealth, and dignitie is as a rewarde of their securitie and vngodlines. Contrariwise the goodly are in misery and affliction, despised of the worlde, as abjects, fooles and sottes: as the example of the auncient Prophets, Christ him self, and his apostles, with all his true Saintes of God do teach, & we by daily experience doe proue. For when we goe aboute to draw men from couetousnes blasphemy, voluptuousnes, and such other vices, they laugh vs to scorn: and when they heare of the iudgement of God, the rewarde of hane, the punishment of the wicked, they count all

this

this geare to be but a fable, such as Virgill imagineth of hell to make men afraid. But if they were exercised with afflictions and calamities as the godly are, and had a scholemaster to teach them that they are but men (as David prayeth in the ix. psalme) they would learne another song.

The 134. Psalme.

If the Lord had not bene on our side, &c.

This psalme is a thanks giuing to God for his great mercy in preserving his people, placed (as the stories doe shewe) in the middes of the Gentiles and heathen people, as a flock of sheepe in a wild foreyst, or in respect of the multitude, as a citie compared to a mighty kingdom, being compassed on every side with the kings of the Assirians, the Egyptians, the Ammonites, the Amalecites, the Moabites, whom Satan had stirred up with deadly hatred, to bere and persecute them, seeking by all meanes to roote them out from the earth, that thereby he might utterly deface and abolish the word and worship of the Lord. This danger David saw and thanked God which had preserved his people from the rage of so many Lyons and dragons, which notwithstanding that they neuer ceased to seeke their destruction, yet all that they went about was in vaine. And what a miracle was this, that this people could so long continue notwithstanding the malice and rage of so many devils? David therefore in this psalme exhorteth his people to be thankfull to the Lord their God so mightely preserving, defending and deliuering them from the violence of so many nations and kingdoms, hating and persecuting them on every side.

Which psalme we also doe sing, not onely against our aduersaries which hate and persecute the word, but also against spirituall wickednes. For we are taught by the Gospell that there are more seven Demills which lye in waite for vs (where as we were before in danger but of one) which cease not to stirre vpp the whole worlde against vs. Yea our case were more tolerable if we had but onely the worlde, and not Satan also with all his angels and the gates of hell wholly bent against vs. But yet further to molest and vex vs, besides all these we haue also the third enemy, which we carry alwayes about with vs, which we notwithstanding also and suffer at home with vs and euen with in vs, the flesh

The argument of the psalme.

The people of Israel as a sheepe among many wolves

In meane, which giueth vs no rest, but continually tempesteth vs in sinne, fighteth against faith, and striueth in our members against the spirit.

For as much then as the Church of God is neuer free from these daungers, let vs also sing to the praise of Christ this psalme: that he preserueth vs his members from all these enemies. For it were extreme ingratitude not to acknowledge this miracle, that notwithstanding all these, the Church doth yet continue, and that there be some which cruelly reach and confesse Christ, & beleue in Christ, though Satan rage, the world and false brethren conspire against vs, and the flesh (as an vntamed beast) fight against the word and faith neuer so much. This is the benefit then that Dauid so highly extolleth, and wisheth that his people would understand and giue thanks to God for the same.

Verse. 1. If the Lord had not bene on our side may Israel now say:

Verse. 2. If the Lord had not bene on our side when men rose vp against vs,

Verse. 3. They had then swallowed vs vppe quick: when their wrath was kindled against vs.

Here the Prophet Dauid exhorteth the people to consider how mercifully God had deliuered them from the bandes of their enemies, and how miraculously he had preserved that kingdom, and also to praise God with him for the same. Which words are not to be restreyned to Dauids time onely. For the heathen people had oftentimes before warred against them with such force and power as was like to the rage of most huge and terrible floods of waters (whereof he speaketh here) ready to ouerflow them. Therefore seeing he mentioneth here no one kind of deliuerance, it seemeth that he meaneth in these wordes of thankes giuing to set forth what neuer God had done for the succour and deliuerance of his people at any time before. All herein he sheweth (as it were in a glasse) the daungerous state of the church from the beginning, that the faithful may learne to knowe that it hath not bene preserved by the strength and pollicie of man, but by the miraculous power of Gods

of

of God; and therefore in their troubles and afflictions should al-
waies flie to God for helpe and succour.

Israell signifieth the people of God. Let vs acknowledge then
that there is no way for Gods people to escape the hands of their
enemies, but by the help and power of God, and that he will haue
the glory and praise thereof to be giuen to him alone. This praise
can none giue vnto God, but the true Israell, hauing experience
both of their owne weakenes, the force & power of their enemies,
the daungers past, and of the mercifull helpe and protection of the
Lord.

Verse. 2. If the Lorde had not bene on our side when men rose
vp against vs.

This repetition is not in vaine. For whiles we are in daunger,
our feare is without measure: but when it is once past, we imagin
it to haue bene lesse then it was in deede. And this is the delusion
of Satan, to diminish and obscure the grace of God. Dauid ther-
fore with this repetition stirreth vp the people to a more thankful
nes vnto God for his gracious deliuerance, & amplifieth the daun-
gers which they had passed. Whereby we are taught how to think
of our troubles and afflictions past, least the sense and feeling of
Gods grace banish out of our mindes. And here note howe God
dealeth with his people in their distresse, who suffereth their ene-
mies so farre to preuaile ouer them, & differreth his help so long,
till it seeme impossible for them to escape: so that they are com-
pelled to confesse and acknowledge, that they must needs haue
perished if the mighty hand of God had not deliuered them. These
2. thinges then we see the Israelites here to acknowledge: firste
that the Lorde was on their side, that is, succoured and deliuered
them: then also that it had not bene possible, but they must utterly
haue perished if God had not preserved and defended them.

By men is here vnderstand what so euer is great and mightie
in the world. As if he said: we are counted as abjects & outcastes
of the world. The Princes, the rulers, the wise, the rich of this world
rise vp against vs, to destroy vs and to roote vs out from the face of
the earth. If ye beholde with how great and how many kingdoms
we are compassed about, which beare a deadly hatred against vs,
we may se me like to a seely sheepe compassed about with a mul-

strude as cruell wolves, euery moment ready to deuoure it: That we liue in safetie therefore, and that our enemies preuaile not against vs, acknowledge it to be the great mercy of God, O Israell, whiche so miraculously preferueth and defendeth vs so small a flooke.

In like maner we are compelled to say and confesse at this day, that if God did not miraculously defend and preserue his church, the power of Satan is so great, that one of his Angells is able in one moment to destroy vs all that either teache or professe Christe, and to fill the world with bloodshed and slaughter. We see the Princes, the Pope, the Prelates, the mightie and wealthy of the world, peache the whole worlde in a maner bent to destroy vs. Against whom what haue we to defend vs, but that the Lord of hostes hath stretched out his mightie arme ouer vs, which as a brazen waile, defendeth vs against all the cruell battes whiche both Satan and the worlde doe dayly cast against vs. That we liue then, that we teache and you heare the worde, that we haue place and libertie in the Church so to doe, these thinges Satan can not abide, and therefore he rayseth the gates of hell against vs: notwithstanding he is compelled to suffer all these thinges throughe the power of Christ our King, who sitteth at the right hand of God: for by mans strength and power these thinges could not be retained and defended. If Satan then at any time haue his will in troubling the Church, in murdering the people of God, and such like, therefore it is, because God would shewe what Satan is able to doe euery moment if he were not resisted by the almighty power of God, to the end that we should walke in the feare of God, and acknowledging this inestimable benefite, continually pray vnto God for the same. Let vs learne then to sing with Dauid: If the Lord had not beene on our side, &c. whose mightie hand hath defended vs, whose power alone hath preferred vs. And although the worlde rage against vs, though Satan be vs neuer so soze, they can not hurt vs. Be of good comfort (saith Christ our Saviour) for I haue overcome the worlde. I gaue: I giue vnto them euerlasting life, and none shall take them out of my hand.

Verse. 3. They had then swallowed vs vpper quickie, when their wrath was kindled against vs.

In these words he expresseth, not onely the strength, rage, and crueltie of the enemies: but also how weak and vnable the Israelites were to withstand them. And here he pseth a similitude taken of fierce and outrageous beastes, whose properie is, when they haue taken their prayes, to swallow them by aliue. Likewise when we would expresse the crueltie or malice of any towards vs, we are wont to say: he hateth me so readly, that he could finde in his heart to eat me or swallow me hye quicker. The Prophet meaneth then that their enemies were so many and so mighty, that they needed no armour or weapons to destroy them, but were able, like fierce and cruell beastes, to swallow them by aliue, being so weak and so litle a flocke.

Then the waters had drowned vs and the streame had gone ouer our soule.

Terrible is the rage of fire, but much moze terrible is the violence and rage of water, for that no power can resist. Nowe, sayth Dauid, like as huge and mighty floods of water caried with great power and violence, doe suddenly ouerthrowe & beare downe what so euer they meete withall: euen such is the rage of the enemies of Gods Church, which no power of man is able to withstande. Therefore let vs learne to trust to the Lordes defence and succour. For what else is the Church, but as a litle boate tyed by a riuer side and by violence of the water soone caried away: or as a reede which by force of the streame is easily plucked hye and caried away? Such was the people of Israell in Dauids time; being compared to the Gentils round about them. Such is y church like wise at this day, compared to the aduersaries. Such is every one of vs in respect of the force and power of the malignant spirit. We are like a reede which is easily plucked hye: and be like a raging flood which with great might and violence ouerthroweth and carrieth away all thinges. We are like a withered leafe, soone blowne from the tree, and be like a mighty winde or tempest, not onely blowing downe leaues, but plucking hye and ouerthrowing trees and all. What are we then poze wretchedes able to doe of our owne power and strength for our defence? We must learne therefore by sayth wholly to rest vpon the word. For what is our victoie but euen our sayth? Albeit that armour and muni-

tions haue their place, yet can they nothing helpe at all vntill we haue a trust and affiance in the Lord, who hath promised to be our God, our strength, and our defence. Whose power is such, whose mighty arme also is so stretched out for the defence of his, that albeit neuer so great a tempest or violent rage of water should inuade the poorest and simplest cottage that can be, it sojeth not. Let this be then our assured trust; let this be the rocke of our safetie, helpe and succour, that God will be our defender and keeper, that the great floodes and mighty waters carry vs not away. This sure defence and mighty protection of our God the wicked neither know nor beleue: for they attribute all their successe & wellfare to their owne strength, wisdom, and riches. But Salomon, albeit he was a King abundantly indued with all these thinges, yet sayth he: Except the Lord build the house, the builders labour in vayne: Except the Lorde keepe the citie: they watch in vayne that keepe it.

Verse. 5. Then had the swelling waters gone ouer our soule.

He setteth out yet more liuely and as it were before their eyes, the great danger from the which God had deliuered them: And this vehement kinde of speech which he vseth here, hath as great force to make the faithfull to feele from what terrible destruction they were deliuered by the mightie hand of God; as if their danger had bene present before their eyes, & so to become more thankfull to God for the same. For he is thankfull to God in deede for his deliuerance and safetie, which doeth acknowledge that before his deliuerance he sawe nothing else but better destruction.

Note who
are most
thankfull.

Thus David setteth out the afflictions and calamities of the Church and of the godly, whom the world doth not onely hate, but cruellly persecute. Whereby we may see that it hath not onely a greedy desire, but also power to hurt, murder, and destroy. Sathan likewise goeth about like a raging lyon seeking whom he may deuoure. Besides these, there are great and horrible sinnes sticking in our flesh. That we fall not therefore euery moment into desperation or otherwise perishe, it is because he is greater which is in vs, then he which is in the world, or the whole world besides: as David saith: If God had not bene with vs, our enemies had swallowed vs vp aliuie. Now he addeth a notable similitude wherewith

he amplified the daunger of the goodly and power of the wicked
Verse 2. Praised be the Lord; which hath not given vs a pray
 against vnto their teeth; and *Psalm 114* *verse 2*

He exhorteth the faithfull to be thankfull for their deliuerance;
 and expresth vnto them, how and (as it were) with what wordes
 they should declare their thankfulness. Wherein he setteth forth
 yet further by an other similitude; that it coulde not be but they
 must bitterly haue perished, if God had not miraculously defended
 them. For they were, sayth he, no other wise preserved then if a
 man should violently take a pray out of the lawes of a raging and
 cruell beast. As if he sayd: We were in deede like leopards; and
 as a pray ready to be deuoured of cruell beasts: but praised be the
 Lord our God, which would not suffer vs so to perishe. He sayth
 not: which hath deliuered vs: albeit he doth in deede mightely de-
 liuer them: but, which hath not given vs a pray, &c. For this
 is it which specially & holy Ghost here setteth forth, that the wi-
 ked can not hurt the goodly he they neuer so many, mightie, fur-
 ious, cruell and terrible, like to raging and bloody warres; like to
 cruell & outrageous beasts falling upon them with open mouth;
 except the Lord giue them into their hands. Let vs therefore with
 David sing praises vnto the Lord our God, which keepeth and de-
 fendeth vs that the raging and cruell beasts which haue sharpened
 their teeth to deuour vs, can not hurt vs. Without this mercifull
 protection of our God; there is no way to stand against Satan &
 his cruell members the space of one moment.

Verse 3. Our soule is escaped euen as a bird out of the snare of
 the fowler. The snare is broken and we are deliuered.

He amplified yet further by a birds similitude, the great perils
 and dangers of the faithfull being in the hands of their ene-
 mies; as a bird that is taken in the snare is in the hands of the
 fowler; and yet notwithstanding they escaped by the mighty power
 of God; no other wise then the bird that is deliuered out of the
 snare of the fowler. By the snare is here to be vnderstande as well
 the fraud and subtiltie of the enemies; whereby the Israelites
 were brought into thraldom and captiuitie; as also the strength

and power wherewith they were long oppressed: So that they had not onely to do with bloody and cruell enemies, but also were entrapped and snared by fraude and subtiltie, and with might and power miserably oppressed. Thus being unable both in strength and pollicie to withstand their enemies, they were euery way in daunger of death and destruction: whereby it appeareth that they were miraculously deliuered.

And here haue we an image of our spiritual thraldom and captiuitie vnder Satan, in whose snares we were once most miserably wrapp'd. Now therefore that we are deliuered by the inestimable benefite of Christ, let vs acknowledge both our former calamitie, and the libertie of this grace wherein we stand, and let vs beware that we cast not ourselues into þe snares of seruile bondage any more. For Satan sleepeth not but lyeth continually in wait for vs, ready to draw vs into those snares againe, out of the which by the great mercy of God we were deliuered: yea & some times is suffered to hurt either our bodies or our soules; not only to hurt vs that he is able likewise to destroy both body and soule if God did so permitte: but also to stirre vs up to faith and prayer, that we should call vpon him for ayde and succour against these perillous snares, and being deliuered, should giue him thanks and prayse for the same.

Howeuer, every temptation is a snare, whether it be of the flesh or of the spirit. Persecution, torments, imprisonment, slander, diseases and infirmities of the body be snares, which as they are permitted of God to exercise and strengthen our faith: so by the malice of Satan they are wrought to afflict and to vex men, that be may bying them to infidelitie and desperation, and so into the snares of eternall death. From the which snares, but by the speciall grace of God, there is no way to escape.

The snares
of Satan.

Thus our life lyeth alwayes open to the snares of Satan, and we as self-birdes are like at every moment to be carried away. How withstanding the Lord maketh a way for vs to escape. Yet when Satan seemeth to be most sure of vs, by þe mighty power of God the snares are broken & we are deliuered. Experience here of we haue in those which are inwardly afflicted, & with beauties of spirit greuously oppressed, that when they seeme to be in utter despaire, & ready (as you would say) now to perish, yet euen at the last pinch & in the bittermost extremities cometh the sweetest comfort

for

foe of Gods help spirit and callth them by againe. When we
are most ready to perish, then is God most ready to helpe. Except
the Lord had holpy me, (sayth David) my soule had almost dwelt
in silence. *Psalm 93.*
Our helpe is in the name of the Lord, who hath made
both heauen and earth.

This is the conclusion of thanksgiving; containing a most
sentence of great comfort, that against sinne, the horror of death,
and other daungers there is no other helpe or safetie but onely the
name of the Lord. If that were not (sayth he) we should fall into
all maner of sinne, blasphemy, errors, and into all kind of calam-
ities. But our helpe is in the name of the Lord which preserveth
our faith and our life against the Devil and the world. And as ye
heard in the other verses before, so he sheweth in this verse also,
that God suffereth his Saintes to be tempted, and in their tenta-
tion to fall into great distresse, as euen now ready to be drowned
and swallowed by presently with great floods of water: yet not-
withstanding this comfort he sheweth them, that he will not de-
stroy for sake them. By the which examples we may learne to know
the will of the Lord, and to seeke our help and safety at his handes,
which suffereth his people to be exercised in the furnace of Egypt,
not to their bitter destruction; but onely to kill the olde man with
his vaine hope and confidence which he hath in his owne strength.
This is the cause why God suffereth his people so to be exercised.
For it is not hearing, reading, talking, or teaching, nor specu-
lation onely which maketh a Christian man, but practise is that
which specially is required in a true Christian, that is to say, the
crosse, to plucke downe the fleshe and bring it to nothing, that man
despairing of his owne strength and seeing no succour in himselfe,
should resigne himselfe wholly vnto the Lord, looking with pa-
tience and hope for helpe at his hande: for this is the will of God.
Neither must we imagine to our selues any other God then such
one as will helpe the afflicted and oppressed with desperation
and other calamities. To knowe this doctrine is one peece of the
heroye. For they that know it not when temptation assaileth them,
either doe despayre or seeke other helpes. Let vs learne then out
of this psalme, that it is the will of God to exercise his Saintes

The name of
the Lorde is
our onely
Sanctuary &
succour in all
afflictions.

with troubles and afflictions. Who suffereth great floods of water to runne vnder their beaues: who also permitte them to fall into the snages of the wicked, and trespasse euery way, not to destroy them, but to shew them what they are of them selues, & so to teach them to trust in his sauing health. But the flesh looketh to the power and multitude of the aduersaries and her owne infirmities: but to looke vnto God and to hope for his helpe and succour, it is not able.

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Wherefore this is a necessary conclusion: Our helpe is in the name of the Lord. It is a short sentence, but it setteth forth most worthy doctrine and consolation: whereof, specially in these latter daies we haue great neede, seeing þ Pope, together with the greatest part of the Princes & rulers of the world so cruelly doe persecute the doctrine of þ Gospel. In respect of these huge mountains what are we small molehills? Ye although there were no force nor power of man for vs to feare, how are we able to stand against, not onely so many devills, but euen the very gates of hell also? And yet this experience we haue of the great mercy and goodness of the Lord our God, that when we are euen in their handes and neuer so much oppressed, yet are we not forsake, but are safe through our confidence and trust in his helpe. But to this purpose it is impossible for vs to attayne without continuall afflictions: whereby it is necessary that the confidence of all worldly succours should be beaten downe. For vexation and trouble bringeth vnderstanding (as Esay sayth): whereby we are compelled to cry: Helpe Lozde for else we perish. So in the last houre when death approacheth there is nothing wherein mans heart can repose it selfe or finde comfort, but his trust and confidence in the helpe of þ Lozde. There is rest and quietnes, there is perfect peace. He that can then say: My helpe is in the name of the Lord, dyeth happily and is out of all danger. Thus we may learne what it is to haue and enjoy God, euen to rest in the sure trust of his mercifull helpe and succour in all dangers. These are the wordes therefore of a victorious and triumphing sayth: Our helpe is in the name of the Lord which made heauen and earth. As if he sayd: The maker of heauen and earth is my God and my helper. Shew me a God (O ye my aduersaries) like vnto him: What are your snages and your traynes then, compared vnto this God? What are your threatenings, your power, your pollicies, &c.

The fruite
of afflictions

Thus

Thus he setteth the eternall God, the maker of heauen and earth, against all erreours and danglers, against the floodes and ouerflowings of all censurations, and swalloweth vp, as it were with one breath, all the raging furies of the whole world, and of hell it selfe, euen as a litle droppe of water is swallowed vp of a mightie flaming fire. And what is the world with all his force and power, in respect of him which made heauen and earth? Let the world see then, let it rage, so that this succour neuer faile vs. And if it be the will of God that we shall suffer trouble and affliction, yet in him we shall ouercome at length.

The 125. Psalme.

They that trust in the Lord; &c.

The psalme going before is a thankesgiuing or a sacrifice of praise, because the godly see and by experience feele that the Lord is faithfull and helpeth them in the time of neede. This psalme following containeth also, in a maner, the same matter: For it perceynerth to the doctrine of faith, and exhorteth the faithfull likewise to a sure trust and affiance in the helpe of the Lord in all their necessities. Whereunto he stirreth them vp with great and excellent promises. It may also be easily vnderstand by that which we haue sayd before, for herein consisteth all this heauenly wisdom, that we do bitarly remoue out of our sight what so euer flesh can comprehend, and beleue that which the word onely telleth vs, euen against all that which either we know, seele, or see: And therefore this wisdom is against all humane wisdom and reason. For by reason and all that reason can comprehend, we seele, see, and conceiue all things contrary to that which faith leadeth vs vnto.

He that lyeth sicke and at the point of death, can by reason conceiue nothing els but an imagination of death. But a christian man hauing that imagination, knoweth that in death there is true life. But thou wilt say: he seeth and feeleth death in deede, but life he can not feele: I answer, that because he resteth vpon the word, and after it he iudgeth, and not after his owne feeling; therefore euen in death he seeth nothing but life, and in the middes of darknes most cleare light. For like as God maketh all things of nothing; and of darknes light: so he worketh by his word that in

The argument of this psalme.

The power of the word.

¶ III.

Psal. 33.

death there is nothing but life. They then which sticke to the word and promise of God and follow the same, doe finde it true which Dauid sayth: He spake the words and it was done, &c. But before we can come to this experience, we must abide some trouble, & therefore haue neede of such exhortation as this psalme here setteth forth.

Verse. 1.

They that trust in the Lorde, shall be as Mount Sion which can not be remoued, but remaineth for ever.

Psal. 48.

The Prophet bleth here a similitude of Mount Sion, because Jerusalem wherein Sion stood, when the temple was builded had most ample & notable promises of God (as appeareth in very many places of the Prophetes) that it should stand sure & invincible for ever against all troubles and calamities, for that the Lord had his abiding and dwelling there, according to that promise where he sayth: here is my rest: here will I dwell, &c. And therefore Dauid in another psalme glorifyeth on this wise: Lo, the Kings were gathered and went together, when they saw it, they marvelled: They were astonished and suddenly driven backe. As we may see it came to passe under Ezechias in that great destruction of the Assyrians and other Kings, as the stories witness, which shewe that Jerusalem remayned safe in all daungers, not by the strength and pollicie of the inhabitants, but by the miraculous worke of God dwelling in it, and thus mightely preserving and beautifying his owne common wealth.

To hope and
trust in the

Howe therefore, sayth he, like as Mount Sion and our holy citie Jerusalem is neuer moued, but remaineth sure and safe by the mighty protection of the Lord in all extremities: so he that trusteth in the Lord shall be defended against the furious rage of the world and the gates of hell for ever. Note howe he commaundeth no worke here to be done, as in popery, in the time of trouble men were taught, to enter into some kind of religion, to fast, to goe on pilgrimage, & to doe such other foolish workes of deuotion, which they drused as an high service vnto God, and thereby thought to make condigne satisfaction for sinne and merite eternal life: but simply he leadeth vs by plaine way vnto God, pronouncing this to be the chiefest anker of our saluation, onely to hope and trust in the Lorde, and that this is the greatest service that we can doe vnto God,

God. For this is the nature of God (as I haue sayd) to create all thinges of nothing. Therefore he createth and bringeth forth in death life, in darkness light. And this to beleue is the very nature and most speciall property of faith. When God then seeth such a one as agreeth with his owne nature, that is, which belueth to finde in daunger helpe, in pouertie riches, in sinne righteousnes, and that for Gods owne mercies sake in Christ alone, him can God neyther hate nor forsake: For he serueth and worshippeth God truly which putteth his whole trust in the mercie of God. Altho this seruice God is highly pleased, because he desireth of nothing to make some thing. So he made the world of nothing: so he rayseth by the pooze and oppressed: so he iustifieth the sinner: so he rayseth the dead: and so he sauereth the damned. Who so then consenteth to Gods nature, and obepeth his will, there hoping for some thing where nothing is, he it is that pleaseth God and shall neuer be moued.

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of faith.

But thou must beware that thou imagine not to thy selfe a false hope, contrarie to the word of God and thy vocation. Whereof if thou be certayne and abide in the same, if troubles rise trust in the Lord, and if he helpe not in his good time, take me and David also for I pers. Satan will trouble, bere and discomfote thee, yea and peradventure make thee to beleue that thou art utterly forsaken: but if thou trust in the Lord thou shalt seele his helpe with full victorie. So in the counsell of Aufpurge when the Princes were bent against vs with one consent, our cause seemed to be utterly ouerthrowne. Notwithstanding yet we liue and enioy such peace and libertie as we would wish, maugre the rage and malice of the Pope and all the aduersaries of the worlde. Altho such conflictes we must be exercised lest we be discouraged when we see our cause begin to quale. But the greater the daunger is, the more steadfastly we must trust. So shall it come to passe that when we are overcome, yet we shall overcome, and the conquerer shall yeeld vnto vs triumph and victorie.

This is it that the psalme here setteth forth: They that trust in the Lorde shall be as Mount Sion, which can not be remoued, but remayneth foreuer. And here we haue a singular promise, whereby we are assured that we shall stande and abyde for euer. If then we doe not continue it is our owne fault, because we abide not firme and stable in our sayth: For this pro-

mise must needs remaine sure and infallible. Yea as it is impossible that God should deny him selfe and not be God: so is it impossible that he should forsake those that put their trust in him. But we may not thinke the time longe, but patiently abide the Lords leisure. For Gods power taketh no place in vs untill we be utterly (to speake after the manor of the Scripture) exinanited that is, strip naked of all worldly hope and helpes that man hath in him selfe, and brought to nothing: like as when he sauerth a ship from drowning, now ready to perish and past all remedy: As the two stowes of the Gospell, one of the shippe, the other of the daunger of Peter, doe testifie.

Vers. 2. As the mountaines are about Ierusalem: so is the Lord about his people from henceforth and for euer.

Ierusalem
called holy
by the figure
Synecdoche
where a part
is taken for
the whole.

Where many hundred thousands of men are there, are scarcely 7. thousand which knowe God or beleue in God, and yet for their sakes the whole multitude is called Gods people. Euen so was it in Ierusalem. Albeit the greater part was wicked and godles yet was Ierusalem called holy, not onely in respect of a small number of the godly: but also because God had his abiding there. So when there was not one iust person in Sodome but Loth with his two daughters, yet could not the angell destroy Sodome with fire so long as Loth was in it. Likewise where 4. or 5. or 10. godly persons are to be found, for their sakes the whole citie is called holy. For these are the elect corner stones, these are precious peacles which God so highly esteemeth, and for whose sakes he spareth the wicked. Therefore saith Dauid: As Ierusalem is compassed about with mountaines, so doth the Lord compasse his people and mightily defend them on euery side. In like maner Zachary prophesieth of a citie whose wall is of fire. These similitudes doe set forth vnto vs the safetie of Gods people, that weake and litle poore flocke, against all daungers. Upon this promise if we also doe rest which at this day enioy the inestimable benefite of Gods holpe word, we shall be defended against the rage of Satan & the whole worlde, not by fiery and brassen walls, but by the Lord him selfe. These things albeit we cannot comprehend, yet should we beleue them so certainly as if we did see them with our bodily eyes. If we should see our selues compassed about with brassen and fiery walls,

smalls, we would be without all feare, and triumph against Satan. But it is a matter of faith, not to trust unto that which the eyes see, but which the woꝛde offereth and promisseth. This one thing therefore is lacking in vs, that we haue not the eyes of the spirit, but we iudge according to the eyes and sense of the flesh. For else we should be no moꝛe afraide then they which being closed within the walls of an invincible castle, feare not the foꝛce and power of their enemies, be they neuer so terrible. We must not doubt therefore, but if we beleue, we are compassed about with fiery and brazen mountaines, that is to say, we abide for ever invincible against the rage of Satan and all the powers of darkenes. Blessed therefore is he that beleueth.

These mountaines are the Angells, which compass vs on every side, that Satan with his angells and ministers can not hurt vs as he would. Whose malice and power is such that if they did not continually beholde vs, continually defend vs and watch ouer vs, he would destroy vs every moment. This can all they testifie which knowe that Satan is a murtherer and a lyer, which can not abide to see the goodly prosper, & therefore he seeketh by all meanes to roote them out from the face of the earth. That we are not then utterly consumed, it is the benefite of these mountaines, by whom we are so compassed and defended. Some times Satan hurleth his darts at vs as it were through the window to destroy vs, and worketh vs in deede some sorrow, but he can not moue vs.

This similitude seemeth to be taken out of the booke of Helicous in the 2. booke of the Kinges, where the seruant of Helicous saw the hilles about him full of fiery chariotes and hayemen compassing Helicous round about, and mightely defending him. This succour which the seruant of Helicous sawe, and the Prophet beleued when he saw nothing, is, saith the Prophet, round about all them which trust in the Lord: as also the 34. Psalm witnesseth: The Angell of the Lorde pitcheth round aboute them that feare him. But our eyes are shut vp and see not these miracles, whereof notwithstanding we haue dayly experience.

This promise then will neuer deceiue vs: onely let vs not deceiue our selues. If therefore we did beleue, no doubt, we should sleepe, we should liue, we should dye, yea (that moꝛe is) we should suffer what so euer Satan and the world can doe against vs, without all feare. For thus should we thinke: If I suffer any thing, it

is not without the will of God nor without good cause, well knowne, though not unto me, yet unto God. Therefore although Satan breake through the wall in one place, yet shall he neuer be able utterly to overthrowe it altogether. Thus should we thinke in our troubles and afflictions, and comfort our selues with the good will of God. But we are afraid when any trouble commeth, and neuer feele that securitie which faith bringeth. Thus doe we woorthely suffer the punishment of our incredulitie which we nurture within vs, although we be called away from it by so many notable places of the Scripture.

Besides all this, it is not enough that we are compassed about with fierie walles, that is, with the sure custody, the continual watch and warde of the Angels, but the Lord him selfe is our wall: so that euery way we are defended by the Lord against all daungers. Aboue vs he is a heauen, on both sides he is as a wall, vnder vs he is as a strong rocke whereupon we stand: so are we euery way sure and safe. Nowe, if Satan through these munitions cast his darts at vs, it must needs be that the Lord him selfe shall be hurt before we take harme. But great is our incredulitie, which beare all these thinges in vaine. Yet must they be taught and learned, lest the time come that we be destitute of all counsell and comfort in these matters. For certain it is that the bowe shall come when we must haue experience of these thinges or else utterly perish.

Where he addeth: From henceforth & for ever. By these words he sheweth that this vigilance of the Lord ouer vs, is not temporall, but eternall, according to that which he said before in the first verse of this Psalm: They shall remaine for ever. Let vs learne therefore out of this Psalm, that our constancy and perseuerance consisteth in this, that we are defended by the power and prouidence of the Lord on euery side.

Vers. 3. For the rodde of the wicked shall not rest on the lotte of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand vnto wickednes.

Here the Prophet plainly declar eth that the people which rest vnder this defence and protection, are afflicted and subiecte to all miseries and calamities as touching the fleshe: although they be

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compassed about with such high and mightie mountaynes as touch-
ing the spirite, as Adam can neuer surmount, yet touching the
flesh and the olde man, they lye open as euery doore to the barres of
Satan and of the worlde: For God by these meanes will afflict
and exercise the flesh, that sinne & the foolishnes of the flesh may be
mortified in them, and that spirituall wisdom and the inward
man may encrease. This is the cause why we are, according to the
flesh, as a broken hedge, and as a citie whose walls are cast downe,
and so lye open to the enemy on euery side. Wherefore there is
no sort of men so vile and obiect which do not thinke that they may
doe what they list against the true professors of the Gospell. Here-
of come such intollerable injuries, horrible blasphemies, cruel tor-
ments, and bloody slaughters of the Saints of God. For the flesh
hath no walls, no munitions to defend it, but the spirite. Therefore
the flesh is in daunger to all stormes and tempests, broken & troden
downe of the wicked, as Esay sayth chap. 51. Which haue sayd
vnto thy soule: Bow downe that we may go ouer. Thou hast layd
thy body as the ground, and as the streete to them that went ouer.
These afflictions we must needes suffer and by patience overcome
them, & withall we must beware that by these outward afflictions
the inward man be not weakened or overcome resting in this assur-
ed hope and trust, that the Lord will neuer forsake vs, but that we
are in the bosome of the father, and are closed within most sure and
strong holds. So that now, although our goodes, our wiues, our
children, yea and our liues also be taken from vs, yet we shall ne-
uer be forsaken of our Christ, by whome we are so surely defended
that in the midst of all our tentations he will make way for vs
to escape, or else geue vs strength to beare them.

Thus we see what consolations the holy Ghost setteth forth vnto
them which beleue the word. For vnto such as looke for a better
life then this, all thinges are here full of calamities and miseries:
Death followeth death, as Paule sayth, and we continually dye.
One temptation followeth another vntill at the length by the death
of the flesh all miseries shall cease and haue an ende. This verie
therefore maketh much for our comfort, admonishing vs that we
must suffer many troubles; yet so, that at the length we shall be
safe and sette at libertie from them all, though not in this life,
yet in the life to come and in eternall life. And why should we not
thus boldly promise vnto our selues, remayning vnder this di-

ligent custody of the Angells, pea of the Lord him selfe, which is alwayes round about his people. Was here (as before I sayd) no haue nerue of sayd, that we may indge herein, not according to our present troubles and tentations, but according to the word of promise. And what should we neede any promises if there were no tentations? which tentations whether they be within in the spirit or without in the flesh; the time shall come when we through Christ shall haue full victory herof, as this verse full of sweet consolation both promise vnto vs.

Notwithstanding this promise seemeth incredible both to vs which suffer, and also to them which persecute and afflict vs. For if we behold the same with our outward eyes, what can be more false? yea the contrary seemeth to be most true. Behold our Saviour Christ, was he not so forsaken, hanging vpon the crosse, that the rod of scepter of the wicked rested vpon him? Did it not rest likewise vpon the Prophets, the Apostles and other holy Martyrs? This matter then, if we consider it with our outward eyes, hath an other meaning: then the wordes doe import. For they promise that the scepter of the wicked shall haue no power over the goodly, and yet all stories and examples doe tellie the contrary. Therefore the holy Ghost calleth vs backe to the purpose & counsell of God reuelled in his word, and commandeth vs to wepe and consider, not what we suffer, and with our outward eyes behold, but what is decreed with the Lord in heauen. And he that can so separate him selfe from the beholding of his afflictions and tentations; and yeld him selfe wholly ouer to the will of God, & thereby get a right conscience: yea he that is ignorant herof, in true diuinitie knoweth nothing at all. For what knoweth he which is ignorant that God is such a God as will not suffer the goodly to be oppressed of the wicked? For seeing he hath sayd: I am the Lord thy God, he will neuer suffer that which is his owne to be wrested either by the world or by the gates of hell out of his hands. If he therewithal continue, they shall also continue for ever which are his. Thus to beleue and thus to lay hold on things inuisible, is true diuinitie and true spirituall wisdom in deede, whereupon we may ground this proposition out of the inuisible counsell of God: God hateth the wicked & loueth the iust, ergo he will punish and destroy the wicked, and will be liuer and saue the iust. And here we see that which is the chiefest thing in all the psalmes and

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Prophets, to spring out of the first precept: I am the Lord thy God.

Now haue we to learne how we may apply this verse rightly and to our comforte. For true diuinitie consisteth in use and practise. We are vexed on every side with cruell Bishops, wicked Princes, and others which hate the word of God and the doctrine which we profess. But these are very trifles, if ye compare them with those vexations which Satan, sinne and our owne infirmitie raise vpp in our consciences. We must learne therefore thus to iudge of all these thinges, that they are the rodde of scepter of the wicked: and to set the Lord against them, reueiling his will here in his word, and pronouncing that he will not suffer the scepter of the wicked to rest vpon the godly. Seeing then the same Prince promisseth thus much vnto vs which hath all thinges in his hand, what can we require more? For the will of God is certaine, that though he suffer vs to be afflicted, yet will he not see vs troden vnder foote or perishe. Thus must we apply these sweete consolations.

What the rodde signifieth in the scripture it is wel knowne. Children when they are yong are corrected with a rodde, & when they were bigger with a wand or a cudgell, and if they will not so amende, then followeth the yron rodde. Whereof it cometh that the rodde signifieth all power and rule which is for the amendment and correction of such as doe offende. So is it taken in the 110. Psalme. The Lord shall send forth the rodde of thy power out of Zion: That is to say, thy kingdome: For there he signifieth such a rodde wherby kingdoms and people are gouerned. On this wise the holy Ghost permitteth here to the wicked, dominion and tyranny vnder the godly, which they are compelled to suffer. Like as we are compelled not onely to see but also to suffer the tyranny of Antichrist and the power of his kingdome, persecuting destroying & murdering the Christians, and raging against them with all kind of tyranny. Yea we are compelled moreover to suffer the tyranny of Satan bering and terrifying my heart and the hearts of the brethren which beleue in Christ. This dominion of tyranny the holy Ghost calleth the rodde of the wicked, and comforteth vs: that as the Lord liueth their tyranny shal fall and shall not rest vpon the lotte of the godly.

The lotte of the iust is as much to say as the portion, that is,

the number of congregation of the iust. Like as Christ called them the little flock, and Paule, the poore Saints. Ouer these, sayth he, although the tyrannes doe rule, yet shalt not their power, endure. Although the persecutoys of the Church doe oppress the faithfull, yet shall they not doe so alwayes, neither shall their counsellis haue that successe which they desire. For they thinke to route out this doctrine for euer; but that shall they neuer be able to doe. Therefore albeit ye suffer in the meane time, saith the holy Ghost, yet know ye, that my will is, that they which beleue in me shall neuer perishe but shall be preserved to life euersing. Were then haue ye whereunto ye may trust in all your tentations.

But behold the reason which the holy Ghost here useth to proue that the scepter of the wicked shall not rest vpon the iust. God is moued saith he, to helpe and defend the iust. For else it might come to passe that God should haue no Church at all, and the iust should put forth their hands to wickednes. So we finde in Ieremy that befoze the people were deliuered into the handes of the Babylonians, they had a promise that after seuentie yeres they should returne againe to Ierusalem, because they should not be brought into doubt of Gods mercy and so vicerly despaire, and falling away from God, should turne to gentilitie: As it is in the psalme, lest the godly should turne to foolishnesse, that is to say, should blaspheme and become impatient. This is the cause why God toucheth the promise of the word with the execution and performance of the deed: or else the godly should be driuen to desperation. We see how many are cast downe with aduersity by the losse of goods, wife, children and other things which are deare vnto them. Except therefore their mindes were raised vp againe and comforted, first with the worde and promise, and then with the performance and execution of the same, many would say there were no God. Therefore God must needs shew him selfe to be a God, not onely in word but also in deede.

Dauid had great promises of God, and yet by his owne fault he was driuen out of his kingdome and so persecuted that he was compelled to flie away barehead and barefoote. This was a temptation. Therefore the great and ample promises made vnto him could neuer haue raised him vp & comforted him againe, except God had in deede deliuered him out of this greate misery and

afflictions

affliction. Euen so if we haue no more but the promises of God to support vs against the Papistes and aduersaries of the word, yet if God did not in deede fight for vs and defend vs against their tyranny, we should be swallowed vp with sorrowe and brought euen to desperation. God therefore worketh both wayes: he raiseth vp with the word and promise, and deliuereth out of troubles and afflictions by execution of the deede, that according to the saying of S. Paule, the temptation should not be aboue our strength, but should haue an ende, and we learne by our owne experience that the first commaundement: I am the Lord thy God, is most certayne and infallible. Therefore when he saith: Least the iust should put forth their hand to wickednes, it is as much as if he should say, least the iust should turne away from God and fall to gentilitie. For God hath a double care ouer the faithfull: first that they be not overcome, but may overcome the temptation: and this he doth by the word and promise. The second is that the temptation be not perpetual. Euen so must we be vndoubtedly perswaded that besides the infallible promises which we haue of the good will of God towards vs, and in the end of euermlasting life, we shall be also deliuered, and our aduersaries destroyed, albeit we can see no manner of way or possible meanes howe it may be done. This is it then that this verse here setteth forth, that God is so carefull for the safety of his people that he seemeth to feare least they should put forth their hand to wickednes & fall away from him, whereby it might come to passe that he should haue no people & so there should be no God. For God is the God of the liuing, and therefore he must needs haue a people. Wherefore there must euer be some remayning which may praise and worship him. If there must needs be such a number remayning, God must of necessity make an ende also of temptations.

But here we must beware that we doe not appoyne the time of this deliuerance. For before that come, God will haue vs tryed to the uttermost and brought to that extremitie, that all our hope and trust shall be utterly spent & we at the point of desperation. Now, when we are brought into this case that we can see nothing but desperation, then, euen then God sendeth comfort, in death he sheweth life, and euen in damnation he bringeth saluation: byie this of nothing he maketh all thinges, and when all hope of remedie is past, then beginneth he to worke, and frameth all newe agayne in most

perfect wise. Thus can not the God of this world doe. This is the singular worke of God therfore, that when thou thinkest thy selfe cleane cast away and utterly forlozue, euen then thou shouldest be most sure and safe and most gloriously shine as the day starre in the firmament. These things are easily taught, but by experience we finde and feele how farre they passe all reason and power of man, & how hardly we can beleue that God maketh all things of nothing, that he is carefull for vs, whether we be afflicted in the flesh or in the spirit, and that he is more mindefull of our deliuerance then we our selues can be. These things therfore must be often & diligently taught that we may learne that heauenly wisdom which the first commandement setteth forth vnto vs, namely that our God is suche a one as of olde things is wont to make all new, of poore to make rich, of despised glorious. And this will we would all gladly haue, but that wil not be except contempt and pouertie doe goe before.

Olde things
are passed a-
way: behold
all things
are become
newe.

Here haue we then a singular promise and consolation. As I should say: the rodde of the wicked greueneth you, but be of good comfort my people and patiently endure it, for I wil not suffer the tentation so farre to preuaile ouer you that your confidence and trust in me shall utterly faile you. Stormes and tempestes shall rise and your daungers shall seeme so great as though the waues should presently swallowe you up: But I will not suffer you to perishe. I wil bryde their rage and make an ende of the rodde of the wicked. If Satan & your owne conscience doe accuse you as most wicked and vnrighteous, yet will I not leaue you destitute of my righteousnes. Thus doe tentations teach vs the true vse and meaning of the first commandement, the which none without afflictions and tentations shall rightly knowe or vnderstand.

For as much as we are here admonished of the great daunger that followeth these afflictions & tentations, which they that through impatience forsake the word and faith, doe fall into. Therefore the Lorde here sheweth him selfe so carefull for his people, lest they should fall into this danger. For their state which haue once forsaken the word, is much more perillous then it was before: and into such (as our Sauour Christ pronounceth in the Gospel) doe enter seuen spirites much more wicked then the first. We must therfore patiently suffer and persevere in all tentations, and rather abide all extremities then once synke from the word of life.

The Church not simple: Church as tyme alsoe but litle as tyme. The Church was withered: For so long tyme to persecutions by the wylde of the Church, persecutions of which I will say little; and so to be borne from the light by which it shal be to passe from sinne: even in the Churches; as the example of Peter the heretic in one thing; and to fall away through wickednes and perdition of heart; in another: which can not be in the children of God; but prophecie belongeth to the wicked and godles. This sort of men hath corrupted the Church from the Apostles tyme; and with a shew of holines hath covered the land; which because God punisheth them not, but spareth them and suffereth them to prosper in this world, becoming so proud that they will be counted amongst the holiest; and cleave to the world; as also commonly sayen: We see that not only the godly attempteth with the wicked in this world; but in the Lords house also the wicked shall dwell under the chaffe. We must pray therefore that God would bring these hypocrites to light, & give unto them their full punishment with the wayward of iniquitie. Then shall peace ensue to the Church of God. For when the Church is purged by fire, it shall be made stronger; the wicked which were and persecutors shall be removed; he shall be left with the good and holy; and of be do, and openly declared by the shewly good will and tender love towards them.

The argument of the
Psalm.

Of what manner of captivity this
Psalm treateth.

Touching the captivitie to be of the prophet speaketh in this psalm; the latter part thereof doth agree. Some understand it to be meant of the captivitie of Babylon; some of the captivitie under the Romans; other thinketh it to be that the prophet, who hath been all the captivitie and persecution of this people; looking upon that promise, *Praying: That if they shall be brought back againe to their captivitie for their transgressions; and by repentance should returne unto the Lord, he would bring them out of them; and bring them home into their land againe.* But in myne opinion they goe nearer to the true sense and meaning of the psalm; which doth set forth a most greivous general captivitie of mankind under sinne, death, and the devill; & to shew the redemption purchased by the death

and bloodshedding of Christ and published in the Gospel; for the
kind of speech which the prophet here hath is greater in
rank then that which he applies; which is to the particular capti-
vities; for what great matter was it for the people of the Hebrew
being as it were but a little hardly to be delivered out of tempo-
rall captivittie, in comparison of the exceeding and incomparable
deliverance wherby in Christ was to be delivered from the power
of their sinne and corruption; all but eternall life from death; Sal-
vance; and full health. And therefore he takes his pleasure to be a
figure of the redemption that should come by Jesus Christ; in the
publishing of the Gospel, wherby the kingdom of Christ to ad-
vance, death and the devil, with all the powers of darkenes are
overcome. This psalme being thus generally understood may
also be applied to every particular deliverance; as the
V When the Lorde bringeth againe the captives of
Syon, we shall be like them that dreame.

The Syon is signified that people which had the promise of the
blessing of Christ, for redemption and salvation as first pro-
mised to the people of Syon and to the children of Abraham and
his seed. This people was in bondage under the law; and by the
law under the captivittie of death and sinne. Now if this be
the captivittie of their captivittie, and sigh for their deliverance; what
shall we thinke of the Gentiles which live in bondage; as in their
sinne without any law; without God? He could not there-
fore have signified a more general and more grievous captivittie;
then when he saith that his own people of Syon did long for this
deliverance, which in outward appearance was moste help, as
in David and Saul who mightely flourish. But beholde how lively
hateeth sooth that joy which should followe this deliverance;
Well shall he, saith he, like them that dreame. For this kinde of
speech he expresseth the greatness of their joy, meaning that this
joy and gladnes should be so great, that the hart of man should not
be able to conceive it. As if he should say: when we shall be deli-
vered from sinne and death, and enjoy this everlasting free-
dome eternall, so sure passing all that we could hope or long for;
for we should be like to them that dreame; that is: shall be as if we
had dreamed; for we shall be so full of joy and gladnes, that we shall
be as if we had dreamed; when God himselfe shall be our God, and
we shall be like them that dreame.

AN. 12.

Gen. 45.

great trouble & affliction. So it happened to Peter when he was deli-
 uered by the Angel out of prison. Likewise when it was said to
 Joseph: Joseph thy name liueth, and ruled ouer all the land of E-
 gypt: he was as one reysed out of a dyeme, and could not beleue
 it: until it was shewed vnto him by certaine tokens to be true in
 deede.

Here then is set forth vnto vs the ineffimable grace whereby
 we are redeemed, through the blood of the sonne of God, who d'i-
 uinely saues him selfe, and his owne life: that he might set vs free from
 the power of the deuill, the wrath of God, death and eternall dam-
 nation. But mans hart is nocable, as is said, to comprehend these
 thinges. The more feeling and cast he hath thereof, the greater a-
 lacrie & courage hath he to goe through all dangers. The lesse
 feeling he hath, the more he is shaken with errorrs, and at the
 length looking backe to Egypt with the Israelites, seeketh other
 helpes. Our heart therefore must wholly rest in this redemption, &
 we must labour to haue some part of this rest and feeling which the
 Prophet rightly compareth to a most ioyfull & pleasant dyet.

They that further lift vs in large: this ineffimable benefite of
 Christ of this deliuerance, haue here occasion to amplify the same,
 first by the person of the redeemer, then by the person of the redeemed,
 by their former state and misery, of the power of the deuill; of the
 hugenes and horrow of death; of the swiftnesse of time, &c. For these
 thinges had wholly deuoured all vnto him, & could not be overcome
 but by the sonne of God. This is that vnspeakable most glorious
 redemption, which saitheth & almightie & almightie with vs. They
 therefore that feele not this joy, haue not truly receiued any felicitie
 this benefite, but the word is as a sonne of a froth in their mouthes.

Then shall our mouth be filled with laughter and
 song: as the Prophet saith: The Lord hath done great things for vs: which
 we will not forget.

This place hath in it a singular mainie & therefore the Pro-
 phet setteth here many figuratiues & shadowes of things. By laugh-
 ter he signifieth the ioy of the Gospell. For the Gospell word is
 as nothing of this world, & therefore it is as a froth in the mouth
 of them that are not true hearted. It is as a froth in the mouth
 of them that are not true hearted. It is as a froth in the mouth
 of them that are not true hearted.

saith.

saith. For they must be broken with this pson scepter (as it were) and beaten downe to hell as the psalme prayeth: Let the wicked be turned into hell and all nations that forget God. For seeing they haue a heart of pson, and as the pphēt sayth, a brazen soe-head, they must be terrified with the thundzings of the lawe, that is, they must be brought to the feare of Gods iudgement and filled with the terrour of death, as it hayned to the people of Israell at the mount Sina when the law was published by the voyce of the Lord. But they that haue a fleshy heart, that is to say, a soft and tender heart, may not be killed with the law, but reuiued and rap-sed by with an other kinde of doctrine, which the holy Ghost here calleth laughter and ioy, that is to say, the Gospell. This is the right diuiding of the word which S. Paule speaketh of, to preach & set forth to the impenitent and hard harted, the threatinings of the law, the wrath of God against sinne & the terrours of Gods iudgement: but to the weake and broken harted, the sweete comforts of the Gospell, that they which are secure & without feare, may now learne to feare the Lord: and they that are too much oppressed with feare, may be of good comfort and now begin to trust in the Lord. This difference betwene the lawe and the Gospell is wel knowne, but by experience and practise it is not so well knowne. For our infirmities is such that we are rather touched with the sense of sinne and death then with the laughter and ioy, that is, the sweete comforts and ioyfull promises of the Gospell. For, to speake of my selfe and of mine owne feeling, the redemption and life giuen by Christ doth not so much pearce my hart, as it is terrified with one word or one cogitation of sinne and of the iudgement of God. The cause whereof is so that we can not sufficiently learne this difference betwene the lawe and the Gospell. For although it be both written and taught, yet it is not so effectually felt in the heart: Els should it follow that terrified hartes should cast away all heauines: for so them (as is sayd) perceyue the voyce of laughter and ioy, and not the voyce of terrour and heauines.

And here also we find Satan to be our deadly aduersary, which most subtilly disputeth with vs touching the lawe, and vserh such argumens as we can not deny. For when he layeth vnto vs our sinnes, we are constreynd to confesse and to acknowledge them, which albeit we couer them some times before men; our conscience as a thousand witnesses pronounceth against vs, and wil not

Speculation
is a naked
knowledge
without ex-
perience and
practise.

suffer vs to forget them or hide them. Whereof sometimes ariseth also a doubting or mistrust euen of holy wordes: I speake nothing of those which are manifestly wicked. With these vices Satan pearceth and greivously woundeth the soft and tender hart, onely because this distinction is not so well knowne by practise as it is by speculation. For if we had this practise in deede, we shoulde rightly discern betwene the law & the Gospell, also betwene the disciples of the law and of the Gospell, & beate backe Satan with this answer, that like a lying spirit he seeketh nothing else, but to blind and deceiue the hart with falshood and lyes. For whereas hard and stony hartes be, those he doth not kill or terrifie, but flattereth and filleth them with hope & faire promises: which doe not pertaine to such hartes. Contrariwise, where as such tender and timorous hartes be, as are to much terrified already, and therefore shoulde be confirmed & reised up with the promises of the Gospell, those hartes Satan most of all, not onely goeth about further to afflict and terrifie, but to beate them downe also to utter discomfort. Wherefore the Christian man must learne and labour by feeling and practise to make this distinction in his heart; and say vnto Satan: Away from me Satan with thy lyes. When I am void of the feare of God, secure and hard harted, then come and pleade the lawe against me: then will I heare thee: for then that is the tyme to teach the law. But since thou comest nowe vnto me with the law, whereas my heart is terrified already with sinne & death, I will not heare thee: For thy doctrine pertaineth not vnto me, but laughter and ioy: not terrour and death.

So shoulde Satan be answered when he goeth about to terrifie vs. But by experience we feele that when most neede is, our heart is not able thus to answer, although we haue heard these thinges before neuer so often. The cause is this: that albeit heauen be ours and wide open for vs, yet suche is our nature, and such is our infirmite that all this can not make vs so ioyfull, as the gaping gulph and bozrour of hell doth terrifie vs: So that one cogitation of our sinnes doth moze afflict vs, then all the teaching and preaching of the merites of Christ can comfort vs. Wherefore we must earnestly endeavour to learne this practise, or at the least to attayne to some knowledge thereof, and reple vs our selues with these wordes: that the Gospell is nothing else but laughter and ioy: which properly pertaineth to the captiues, that

that is, to those that feele the captiuitie of sinne and death, to the flesh and tender hearties, terrified with the feeling of the wrath and iudgement of God. These are the Disciples in whose hearts should be planted laughter and ioy, and whiche onely should heare the voyce of ioy and gladnes in the tabernacles of the righteous, and that by the authoritie of the holy Ghost: which this verse setteth forth. For it signifieth that this people was in Sion, and after the outward shew of the kingdom and pietiehood, did mightely flourish. But if a man consider them according to the spirite, he shall see them to be in miserable captiuitie, and that their tongue is full of heavines and mourning, because their heart is terrified with the sense of sinne and death. This is Moyses tongue or Moyses mouth, full of wormewoodes and of the bitterness of death: wherewith he ought to kill those onely which are to liuely and full of securitie. But they which feele their captiuitie should haue their mouthes filled with laughter and ioy, that is, the redemption and deliuerance from sinne and death, purchased by the blood of Christ, should be preached unto them. This is the sense and meaning of the holy Ghost, that the mouth of such should be filled with laughter, that is, their mouth should sound and shew forth nothing else but great gladnes and those inestimable consolations of the Gospell, with voyces of triumph and victorie by Christ, overcoming Satan, destroying death and taking away our sinnes. This was first spoken vnto the Jewes: for this laughter was first offered to that people, then hauing the promises. Now he turneth to the Gentiles, whome he calleth to the partaking of this laughter.

Then shall they say among the Gentiles, &c. The Gentiles naturally hated and disdayned the Jewes, and coude abide nothing less then their religion. Yet these Gentiles, saith he, when this laughter, this ioy, shall be published and preached, shall maruell thereat, and shall praise the great workes of the Lord. Nowe, the Gentiles would not thus doe, or esteem this worke of God as a benefite, excepte they also should be partakers of the same. Therefore when the holy Ghost saith, that the Gentiles should publish, praise and magnifie this benefite of the Jewes, deliuerance out of captiuitie, he plainly signifieth withall that they should be partakers of this deliuerance, and that they likewise should extoll and magnifie this greates mercy of God, this

deliuerance from sinne and death. To this doe almost all the Prophets beare witness. In the 8. of Zachary it is saide that out of all languages of the nations should take hold of the skirt of him that is a Iewe, and say: we will goe with you, for we haue heard that God is with you. Which place of Zacharie seemeth to be taken out of this Psalm. In the first of Esaiæ likewise: All nations shall flow vnto the Lord, and many people shall go and say: Come and let vs goe by to the mountaine of the Lord, to the house of the God of Iacob, and he will teach vs his wayes, and we will walke in his pathes, &c. These things doe make for our comfort, which are not of the seede of Abraham after the flesh. For albeit the promise was not made vnto vs, yet when it was accomplished we were made partakers thereof, but by the Iewes notwithstanding according to the wordes of the promise: In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. And saluation saith Christ cometh of Iewes. Thus doe we Gentiles pertaine to this redemption, although it was not due vnto vs (for to vs it was not promised) but came by the free mercy of God through this laughter and this ioy, whiche the Prophet speaketh of, published and preached not onely in Sion, but amongst the Gentiles also, which doe enjoy all the good blessings and benefites of God together with his holy people, as it followeth.

Verse. 3. The Lord hath done great things for vs, therefore we reioyce.

Rom. 15.

Here you see one Church gathered together of the Iewes and of the Gentiles, and with one voyce magnifying the workes of the Lord, that as Paule saith: with one minde and with one mouth God, euen the father of our Lord Iesus Christ might be glorified. For as the Church of the Iewes singeth: The Lord hath done great things for vs: so singeth the Church of the Gentiles also, being both partakers of one fruit, both knowne by one true signe to be the people of the Gospell, namely because they are the people of ioy and gladnes, as these wordes declare: Therefore we reioyce.

Consider now the kingdom of the Pope and the horrible abomination thereof. In the which there was nothing heard, seene, taught, redde or exercised but mens traditions, mens dreames, which

which of their owne nature can doe nothing else but discomfote & afflict the conscience. For our tradition bringeth forth an other, one obseruation followeth an other, and that worst of all is, they are not onely burthens to the body (for to that ende tend all the ordinances of men, if there be any profitable vse in them) but are now become snares to the conscience. Wherefore there was not one iote of this doctrine in the Popes kingdome that ministered any occasion of ioy or gladnes to the poore conscience. How manuell then if in this kingdome of darkenes the conscience was terrified and found no comfort. For if it be in anguish and terrout, it can not make that distinction whereof we spake before. Great cause haue we therefore to be thankfull vnto God for this inestimable benefite, that we now knowe the doctrine of the Gospell to be the doctrine of consolation & saluation. Through the which doctrine looke how much ioy thou feelest in thy heart, so much thou dost enjoy of life and saluation. But if thou feele thy heart still oppressed with heauines, the deuill hath not yet giuen ouer to vex thee. Wherefore thou must haue thy heart well instructed in the true vse of the lawe and of the Gospell, (as we haue said before) that thou mayst knowe that the lawe ought to be vsed onely against the obstinate and impenitent, and that therein consisteth the true and proper vse of the lawe: but when it vexeth and terrifieth such tender consciences as are to much feared already, it is not rightly vsed, and therefore terrified consciences may in no case harken vnto the law, for to such pertaineth laughter and ioy, the preaching, & ioy, of the Gospell or remission of sinnes giuen vnto vs in Christ by the which we are also sanctified, but by the law we are not sanctified, but the power and gift of sinne is thereby rather increased in vs.

Mens ordinances must onely serue for the exercise of the body & not to bind the conscience.

Verse 4. O Lorde turne againe our captiuitie as the riuers in the south.

Hitherto he hath increased and prophesied of the kingdome of Christ and of the redemption to be wrought by Christ, and afterward to be published to all nations, that thereby might be gathered one church of the Iewes and the Gentiles in the which should be preached nothing else but laughter and ioy, praise and thanksgiving. Now he proceedeth further to describe this Church, and

For which I haue Holueth this fruite of redemption and this communion of the Jewes and Gentiles, namely the great necessity of continuall and faithfull prayer: like as the prophet Zachary also ioyneith with the spirit of grace the spirit of prayer; that is, with the redemption which was wrought by Christ, the prayer of the faithfull and of the redeemed. For although our redemption be fully wrought: we redeemed by the blood of the sonne of God, yet is it necessary that we shoulde pray for this redemption: as Christ also in his prayer commaundeth vs to do, that Gods name may be sanctified, which notwithstanding we know to be holy and sanctified already: that the kingdome of God may come, which is come and is within vs already. As Christ saith: Father glorify thy name, and the father answereth, I haue glorified it, and I will glorifie it againe. Also Saint Paule saith: I count not my selfe to haue attained vnto it, &c. He meaneth the fulnes of the knowledge of Christ, and perfect tast of the power of his resurrection.

This is it which I touched before, that this benefite of the gospel, this inestimable giste of our redemption and life euerslasting is easie to be uttered with wordes, but moste hard to be helde with the heert. For we haue in this life, not the reynches, but the first frutes of the spirit: but the flesh yet lauerh fall: and wholly in a manner strong and lusty. True it is that we haue entred our foote into the kingdom of God, and haue thereby obtained the warrant of the promise. But we must not there rest: we must make it as other foote after, that is, we must continually inuolue and goe forward in the knowledge of grace and of faith: and for this cause the prophet Zachary saith that the spirit of prayer is poured forth vpon vs, which spirit requireth this excedde in vs. And Saint Paule saith: that the spirite fighteth with fleshe that can not be expulles, yea and that every creature also fighteth for the deliuerance of the chyldren of God. Wherefore whyles we are in this body, which presseth vs downe as a heauy burden, and hindyeth vs that we can not fully apprehend these thinges, we haue not onely the spirit of grace, but the spirit of prayer also, that we might be assured of the graces and good will of God toward vs for Christ sake in whom we helpe, and yet shoulde not cease to pray that God would make perfect in vs that he hath begunne.

John. 12.

Phil. 3.

Lc

Let no man then thinke that once to haue heard these things
maketh him a true diuine, or that he hath more aueriles to the fall
and perfect knowledge hereof. For this arrogancie maketh diuini-
tical spirites, which like to Asopes dogge, follow the shadow and
lose the thing. In deede, if we looke to the word, to baptisme, to
Christ him self, al is perfect. But we speake nothere of the things
but of the apprehension thereof. So life euertlasting is perfect. In
my fathers house are many mansions, sayth Christ. But in these
mansions we are not yet fully settled so long as we liue here. In the
meane time we are oppressed with cares, vexed with sinne, afflic-
ted with tentations, terrors and desperation. Satan neuer cea-
seth to assaile our faith, hope, and other vertues which God hath
planted in vs. And this prerogative hath Satan because the grace
which is begun in vs is not yet perfect. Therefore he fighteth so
busely against these beginnings, fearing least they should come to
perfection. Such is the life of Christians, which haue already re-
ceiued the first frutes of the spirite, who by experience doe learne
these things can not be fully apprehended, but that in the meane
while they shall often times slippe, yea and some tynes daunge-
rously fall, so that the sparke of faith and of the spirite may seeme
to be in them vterly quenched, as it hapned to Dauid in his do-
mtery: where in they haue neede of helpe to risse them vp againe, as
Christ answered to Paule: my power is made perfect in infirmi-
tie. The infirmite is theirs and remaineth theirs whiles they
liue, but the power and strength is Christes alone.
In this daungerous state they flie vnto prayer and say: Make
me not into tentation: Gine victory O Lord, that my faith faile
not, that my hope be not confounded. Make perfect the good worke
which thou hast begunne in me. For withstanding these are they
which not onely haue receiued the first frutes of the spirite (as is
sayd) but also haue perfect redemption, true hope of life euert-
lasting, remission of al their sinnes, true deliuerance from the bea-
st, hell and eternall death. All these things haue they: and in the
things there is no defect, but the defect is in me and in thee, be-
cause we haue not yet fully apprehended these things. For with
our blood and the remnaunces of sinne doe yet liue in vs. This
saied Paule to cry out and say: If we an odes haue not overcome
the fighting against the law of God. And this is the cause why
a Christian can not be secure. For he feareth that he shall not yet

Satans pre-
rogative.

Rom 7.

ourcome all perills and daungers which the enemy dayly deu-
seth. But for so much as pertaineth vnto Christ (as is sayd) whom
by faith he apprehendeth, on whom he beleeueth, true it is that he
hath all thinges. For in Christ the deuill is overcome, the law ful-
filled, the wrath of God pacified, and death it selfe vanquished. In
this state we stand if we looke to Christ, on whom we beleeue. But
when we looke backe into our selues, we are forced to confesse that
we are not pure, because our sayth is not yet perfect, and therefore
can not perfectly apprehend perfect thinges, as S. Paule sayeth:
Therefore when we come to the combats, we giue place to the e-
nemy, we suffer our hope to be wrestled from vs, we are cast into
heauines, impaciencie, &c. Thus Christians are warriors & God
true souldiers, which stand alwayes in the battaile, and can not be
secure of voyds of feare. Therefore they are seruent in prayer and
cry vnto God for succour. Contrariwise, they that are secure, pray
not, for they thinke that the deuill is farre enough of, and so that
faith & feeling of the good gift of God which they seemed to haue,
they lose before they be ware; and when temptation commeth, they
are like to a withered leafe.

Thus we see the great necessitie of prayer, and how it ought to
be continually bled among the faithfull, if not with the mouth, yet
with the hart and hartie sighes vnto God, according to the wordes
of S. Paule: Let the word of Christ dwell in you plentifully: sym-
nizing that they ought to be continually exercised therein, not on-
ly by teaching the same to other publickely and priuately, but also
by earnest meditation and prayer, when they sit at home in their
houses, as Moyses teacheth, when they walke by the way, when
they lye downe and when they rise vp. For as the Deuill goeth a-
bout like a roving lyon, strong and mighty, seeking whom he may
deuoure: so are we on every side infirme and weake, pressed downe
also with the flesh, full of sinne, & carrying this creature in earthen
vesselles: In the which our sayth is as a tender plant, which be-
cause it is not yet come to perfect strength, may be easily shaken
with winds and tempests. This know not they which before they
have had some triall of their selues by affliction or warring with
the enemy, thinke them selues to be Christians and sound in faith.
This must watch therefore and pray as Christ commaundeth that
in our daily conflictes we may stand stedfastly against the darts of
Satan which would vsurpe vs to the contempt of God and man.

Philip. 3.

So

[illegible]

he perswadech our hearts, so by voice of the word of God. Here he directeth by a sparke, as it were, a flaming fire in our consciences; which before we can quench and apprehend Christ and his word againe, either we are oppressed with anguish and sorrow, or bitterly consumed. For he is a murderer, and seeketh by all meanes how to destroy vs. It is necessary then, say vs to haue our senses exercised and our mindes occupied in the meditation of the word and prayer, that the enemy find vs not vnarmed. Imposedly which to busily seeketh to haue us lost this redemption. It also is a Diuine, which by great troubles haue gotten some knowledge and understanding of the holy Scripture, and yet are not so filled up through this gift, but that I do daily exercise my selfe euen amongst the children in the Catechising, in secret meditation: I mean of the commandments, the articles of the belife and the Lords prayer, &c. with an earnest and attentive minde, not onely recounting with my selfe the wordes, but observing and weying also what euery word signifieth. And doubtles I am not thus exercised, but am occupied with other matters, I finde an antie commoditie thereby. For the word is delivered vnto vs to this ende that we should continually exercise our selves therein. For without this exercise we waxe dull and forget our felings. Wee see into what great paygers men easily fall. And whereof else cometh this, but because they are secure, they pray not, they beare not the word thereby. Some are worldly in their hearts by idle and idle a contempt of the word, and so haue gotten thereby in euill den reuerence, or other horrible calamities. For if the word be once lost and gone, what hath a man to defend him selfe withall against this aduersary. It is the part of a Christian therefore to be exercised continually in the word and prayer, not onely because he cometh with such things as shall be good, is notable fully to comprehend, but also for that our aduersary tempteth not onely the outwardly, therefore we must continually fight against him with the word and prayer. Thus we see that prayer pertaineth to the people of Christ, to the redeemed and sanctified: for the unbelievers which doe not pray.

Amongst other things which properly pertaine to the redeemed

men, this also is one, that they are subject to many temptations, according to the saying of Saint Peter: By many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the profession of a Christian man is rightly called the profession of the crosse. So it behoued Christ the head of his Church, to suffer. And the prophets through inspiration of the holy Ghost, did reuise before of his passion and his glorification which should follow. And how can it be but that Christians must needs suffer, since they shall finde no hind of life in the world which is without the crosse, except they will be vntrue. But if thou vnwittingly seeke to liue worldly and godly in this world, it can not be auoyded but that Satan will lay a crosse vpon thee and bere thee. How much more then will he be so doe when thou must fight with him touching righteousness and life euellasting? For if Satan can not abide ciuill and eternall iustice, howe will he abide eternall righteousness whereby he knoweth that he shall perish for ever? Thus Satan continually persecuteth and beareth the children of God. Wherefore of all men their life is most miserable, wherby they looke to the things which they suffer in the flesh, or in the conscience. In ciuill affaires and things pertaining to this life, there appeareth some shadow at the least of honor and pleasure: but they that will be true Christians, feele their selues miserably wrapped in sinne which maketh the conscience guiltie before God. Whereouer in the sight of the world they are counted as wozmes, outcastes, and cursed people, subiect to the malice of Satan and the whole world, & therefore the world fighteth against them with all kind of cruelties. What then shall we see the true image of a Christian, let him behold Job, compassed on every side and oppressed with deuils, greenously afflicted and consumed, full of sores and loathsome sores. What shall we then doe? These things must we suffer if we desire to attayne eternall life, if we will confesse and acknowledge our redeemer Iesus Christ and our redemption; let vs be assured that there shall alwayes be many which will looke for people out of our righteousness and eternall life.

Let vs therefore, as Simeon teacheth vs prepare our soules to temptation, and let vs offer our bodies to the plagues, as in the psalme is said, For whosoauer counteth himselfe a Christian, must thinke himselfe no better then his master Christ: if so we must be made like to the image of the sonne of God. If Christ bare a crosse of

If we will be partakers of

his glory, we
must be also
partakers of
his sufferings

choyue vpon his head, let not vs thinke that we shall haue a gar-
land of roses set vpon our head: For of our partes we feele paine
and tribulation, neither doe we giue vnderstande full occasion to
rage against vs. Albeit Satans malice is not so pacified, that he
ther entreated.

Behold nowe therefore the miserable image of a Christian
which is redeemed notwithstanding he is full of sinne, full of sor-
row, and full of death: He is like vnto Lazarus lying before the
rich mans gate. He is like to Iob oppressed with infinite afflictions
and calamities. Here thou wilt say: What would then befall to be
a Christian? Harken therefore what Peter saith: Brethren, thinke
it not strange as concerning the fiery tryall which is amonge
you to proue you, as though some straunged thing were come vnto
you: but reioyce in as much as ye are partakers of Christs suf-
ferings; that when his glory shall appeare, ye may be glad and
reioyce. For this is the image of Christ, of his Church, and of all
the brethren, that we should suffer. But looke not to the sufferings
and tribulations onely; but behold also the fruites that followeth,
namely that they which haue in teares washed their faces in Ioy, shall
haue more comfortably to those that carry the crosse of
Christ, which following the spirit are deers of death, touching
the body afflicted of the world. For Satan oppugneith our faith,
causeth vs to murmur against God: or else to oppresseth our
hartes with heavines and sorow, that we knowe not what we do,
or whether to murmur or no: yet is it such that we are sanctified and
redeemed. For with standing this temptation is good: but the
temptation is felt both in the spirit and in the flesh. Brethren,
this, the world readily not to beleeve, the secretaries of the world
flounder vs and our doctrine, and falsely accuse vs, seeking to
find occasions to molest vs; yea to roote vs utterly from the face
of the earth.

When a man once feeling these things, his heart trembleth
and reprob: Haue more poysoned. Lord haue mercy vpon vs.
All this is to sorue in teares, to goe forth and weepe, and to cry
rebelloy to the holy ghost that dwelleth in. It can not be then but that
Christian must needs be such a sower as must reape not in sinne
yet, but in sinne by god and grace. But thou wilt say: Where is
then the laughter which is promised vs who reioyce? Here is
and spake a little before: In the spirit. For I haue gotten much

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thou hast, so much laughter thou hast also. But sometimes this laughter is lost and turned into mourning: yet are we not forsaken. For the promise is sure, that we shall reape in ioy. And our we must not vnderstand here by sowing, the office of teaching onely, as Paule bleth it: which sow vnto you spirituall thinges, &c. but it signifieth the life of the godly, with the whole course and all the actions thereof which they take in hand in respect of their vocation. For these are, as it were, seedes of the life to come, which we enioy and possesse in hope. For our saluation is sure & certaine, and the victorie ouer sinne, hell, and death is ours, but yet in hope. Notwithstanding so long as we are in this life, we remaine alwayes in teares and mourning, as Christ saith: The world shall reioyce but you shall sorrow, but your sorrow shall be turned into ioy. This must we looke for, and with this hope must we overcome all sorowes and vexations: For we are in the sight of God like vnto wild beastes, whom he suffereth continually to be herded & coursed of the hunters, so that we neuer seeme to be in safety. For a Christian without afflictions is nothing. We see how he suffered Peter, Paule and all the faithfull to be persecuted of the hunters, that is, of the Synagoge, the Emperours & Princes, so that they might learne to be humble in them selues, & not to be proud. Seeing then that all they which will liue godly in Christ Iesus, must suffer persecution, we must hold fast this consolation, whereby we may, as it were, season these afflictions, namely that the holy Ghost doth here prophesie that we must sow in teares, but bidde vs be of good comfort notwithstanding: for the more plentiful & bitter the teares be, the greater laughter & ioy shall follow: like as he setteth forth also a contrarie example. The world soweth in laughter, but afterwards it reapeth in euermourning sorrow, anguish & misery. But our tentations & afflictions do here endure but for a little while. Let vs therefore patiently suffer in hope that in the end of this paynfull sowing for so small a time, we shall hereafter reape euermourning ioy and blessednes. And this also bringeth great consolation, that albeit our whole life be full of sorrow, bitter afflictions, and a sowing altogether in teares, yet God will suffer no tentations alwayes to continue. But like as stormes and tempests haue their seasons, and afterwards cometh faire weather, as also after labours followeth rest and quietnes: even so experience doth teach vs that when our heartes haue bene vexed and oppressed

Iohn. 16

with cogitations of desperation, mistrust, impatientie before God and the world, for a day, two, or thre or else longer, God respecteth them by againe with some spirituall comfort. For if tentations should last alwayes, who should be able to endure them, yea we should fall away from God for ever. Therfore our afflictions are tempered with some consolations, that we should know that God will not suffer vs to be altogether swallowed up with sorrow. He will correct vs, as the psalme sayeth, but will not giue vs ouer vnto death. He suffereth vs to be cast downe, but he reacheth out his hand to reple vs by againe. But contrariwise Satan & his worlde doe not cease, with perpetual hatred & insatiable malice to rage against vs. They say: downe with them, downe with them euen to the ground. But Gods anger is not such, who chasteneth and correcteth vs for our saluacion.

Psal. 137.

Let vs learnetherefore to know these things, and that we must suffer afflictions and sorow in teares, lest when temptation cometh we be offended as though some new or strange thing were happened vnto vs, and so flie from God & fall to dispaire: And let vs hold fast this consolation, that our haruest is in heauen, euen life euertlasting, which we shall reape with ioy: and moreouer, that our tentations are so tempered in this life & we may be able to beare them, according to the saying of S. Paule: God is faithful, which will not suffer vs to be tempted aboue that we are able to beare, but will giue an issue or outscapen euen with the temptation. Some times indeed it seemeth impossible for vs to endure the temptation or affliction any longer, but Gods power is made perfect in our infirmities.

Verse. 6. They goe (or going they goe) forth and weepe, carrying precious seede: but they shall returne with ioy & bring their sheues with them.

Howe could the state of the Church or the passage wherein it walketh vnder the holy crosse be more liuely expressed. Wherby we may learne so to arme our mindes that we lose not that laughter which by faith we haue apprehended: but may encrease and waue strong, and feelee this laughter more and more in vs. For faith and the life of Christians is not hypocrisie, as their whole life and religion is which are shut vp in cloisters, which seeke to come to perfection by certaine speculations of the spirituall vnioun (as they call it): but altogether in bayne, as I haue proued by

mine

mine owne experience. For when I did moste earnestly by this meanes seeke to attaine to perfection, I could neuer seeke any fast thereof. Wherefore it is nothing but veritie and hypocrisie. But the Christian life is that which is here described; that is, to be exercised with tentations and afflictions vnder the crosse, and to apprehend the word. This is our true union with God, which consisteth in practice: In the which union we must daily increase; because of the flesh, the worlde & the deuill, which do exercise vs with continuall tentations. For except in these daungers we haue recourse vnto the worde & prayer, we are gone. The crosse therefore is the meane wherewith God will haue vs, not swallowed vp and consumed, but exercised, that we may daily growe more and more towards perfection.

Hopeouer, concerning the text, it saith, *whether ye take this verse as a repetition of that which goeth before, or whether ye deuide them, & referre this verse to the consolation of this present life, and the former verse to the consolation of the life to come.* Notwithstanding it seemeth to me that the intent of the Prophet is here, properly to signifie that afflictions doe not come vnto the faithfull once onely and no more. For although consolations are now and then intermixed, yet one temptation followeth another: so that all their life is in a manner nothing else but a continuance of tentations. So hath it alwayes bene that when one heretic has overcome in the church, another hath sprung vp: when one tyrant by the hand of God hath bene oppressed, there hath risen by another. So privately also Gods children doe feele this one temptation, one affliction or desperation being overcome, another followeth; and the end of one trouble is the beginning of another. This continuance of the crosse he seemeth also to expresse by this repetition, when he saith: *Going they goe soorth.* For there is no ende of teares before we goe downe into the graue.

Where the Interpreters haue translated: *Good or precious seede,* let them that are learned in the Hebrew tongue, see to it: for the figure is to farre sette. It seemeth rather to signifie a prolonging or deferring of time, so that he expresseth a continuance of tentations, whereof I spake before. The sense and meaning then is, The siege which they carry is long deferred or prolonged: As if you should say: They haue a painefull, sorrowfull, and a tedious life. Day by day they are exercised with vniuersall troubles and afflictions.

¶ ii.

ous, which follow them without ceasing. So that this seede thus prolonged and caried for a long season; is nothing else but tentations continuing and succeeding one after another, one still following upon another. But what is the ende of this continuance? Euen this, that they shall possesse eternall ioy and felicitie. As the authoꝝ of the Epistle to the Hebrewes doth notably declare. No chastising (sayth he) for the present time seemeth to be ioyous, but grievous (here you heare of teares): but afterward it bringeth the quiet sure of righteousness unto them which are thereby exercised (here you heare that they shall retorne with ioy). Albeit then that this seede is prolonged and deferred, yet is it not so for ever: but the ioy that shall follow is everlasting. Thus þ kingdom of Christ consisteth not in the power and riches of the worlde, but in eternall redemption, which we must attaine unto through great afflictions and tribulations. Wherein notwithstanding we are supported by the word and prayer, untill we come to the fulnes of our salvation in the kingdom of heauen.

The 129. Psalm.

Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it:

The argument of the Psalm.

This Psalm beareth the title of Salomon, and in deebe it seemeth that Salomon was the authoꝝ thereof. For Salomon in all his books sheweth him selfe to be a politicall teacher, and handleth not the principall article of his father Dauid as touching iustification, or as touching Christ the heire and offspring of Dauid: but he treateth of those thinges wherein he him selfe was exercised, and whereunto he was appointed of God: that is to say, of thinges pertaining to ciuill gouernment. And this he doth in such sort, as in politicall matters no Philosopher did euer teach. For he applyeth all ciuill gouernment vnto faith, & whatsoeuer is done either in the common wealth or household affaires, þ same he referreth altogether to þ diuine & spirituall gouernment, which other writers, whether they be Philosophers or Oratours, do not. For albeit both lawes do teach, & reason also doth shew by what meanes a common wealth or a family may rightly be gouerned; yet doe they not teach from whence þ successe thereof should be looked for, that þ thinges which are well deuised, may prosper & take good effect. For reason knoweth

but

but onely the materiall and the forme cause: the small and efficient cause it knoweth not: that is, it knoweth not from whence ciuill and household gouernment cometh and by whom it is perserued, or to what ends it tendeth.

Aristotle, Xenophon, Plato, Cicero and others, although they wrote very well of ciuill gouernment, yet doe they not teach the true efficient and the small cause thereof. For they thinke publique peace, honestie and glorie to be the small and the principall cause. And the efficient cause they make a wise man or a prudent Magistrat, or (as they term him) a good man or a good Citizen. But we shall heare Salomon disputing farre otherwise. For they haue and doe follow onely the iudgement of reason: but he hath the holy Ghost which teacheth him the small and efficient cause of ciuill and household gouernment. He hath also reason and experience: for he gouerned both a common wealth and a family. Therefore he is taught, not only by the holy Ghost, but also by experience, to speake as he doth. For he was occupied in great affaires, and had experience of high and weighty matters. And we ought the more highly to esteeme of this psalme, for that it is written of so excellent a man concerning true politicall and household gouernment. Which psalme, although it be but short (for it conteyneth but onely fixe verses) yet is it full of singular doctrine. And as for the forme and materiall cause, he toucheth them not. For he seeth that there are houses already, there are common wealthes well ordered and also furnished with good lawes and Magistrates. But is that enough? No forsooth. For the two principall causes are yet lacking. For as touching the forme cause, it may be that the Gentiles had better lawes then the Iewes. And as touching the materiall cause, it may be also that some Magistrates among the Gentiles were better then they which were among the people of God. But these are but onely the matter and the forme.

We must goe further therefore, and seeke to know the principall causes of common wealthes and household gouernment, who it is that maketh a common wealth and familie, also to what ends he ordereth the same. These causes the Gentiles (a naturall reason do not know. For reason beholdeth but onely the matter and the forme, and because he knoweth not the efficient cause thereof, he goeth about to gouerne common wealthes and families according to that ends which hee selfe doth imagine. Therefore hee

Aristotle and others, howe and wherein they erre.

The principall causes of the good gouernment of common wealthes and families.

Demothe-
nes.

is deceaued and all her policies and deuises come to naught. So Demosthenes taketh vpon him to rule the common wealth of Athens: he maketh him selfe the efficient cause thereof, that is, he goeth about to gouerne it by his owne wisdom and policie, as a wise man. To what ende? Forsooth to establish publike peace and tranquillitie, to winne glozy and quietnes to himselfe and his cuntry, and to the ende that all thinges may come to passe as he by his owne policie and wisdom hath deuised. But God, who hateth proude deuises and presumptuous enterprises, woꝛkech farre otherwise. In the matter then and in the forme there is no default, but in the efficient cause the wisest man of all is deceaued.

Cicero.

Julius Cæ-
sar.

The efficient
cause of the
true govern-
ment of com-
mon wealths
& households.

The same hapned to Cicero in the common wealth of Rome. And the same also hapned to Julius Cæsar. Nowe therefore cometh this teacher Salomon, which hath a farre other manner of spirite toynd with great experience, which teacheth who is the author and the ende, that is to say, the efficient and the finall cause of ciuill and household government: For he comprehendeth both, and teacheth that he which would happily gouerne a familie or a commonwealth, should not make him selfe principall cause thereof, for then should he ouerthrow al. For in both kinds of life a man shall finde many troubles, which will bere and torment his minde, bꝛing him to impacience, cause him to despaire and so be weary of all cogither, yea and to say that Satan brought him into those calamities. And not without cause: For why doth he presume to take vppon him such a government, as is farre aboue his power. So Demosthenes being oppressed with many troubles in the common weale, sayd that if there were two wayes set before him, the one leading to the common weale and the other to death, he would chuse the way that leadech vnto death before the other. Likewise it hapneth in household government. He that entrech into matrimo-

The abuse of
matrimonie
and household
government.

nie promisseth vnto him selfe all easie & pleasant thinges. He thinketh it an easie matter to frame his wife, to bring vp his children and to order his family as he him selfe doth imagine. When these things proue contrary to his expectation, & either his wife is disobedient, his children stubboꝛn & vnthakful, his family negligent, or his neighbours troublesome & anguished (for the troubles of matrimony are infinit) he becommeth impatient, & beginneth to complayne, saying that if he had knowne thus much before, he would neuer haue married a wife. Thus doth the foolish man betwixt

The burdens
of matrimo-
ny are infinit.

his state and condition. But what kind of life is there vnder hea-
 uen wherein thou shalt liue without troubles? For where so euer
 thou liuest, thou must needs be in some part either of the pollicke
 or household government. All herefoze thou must so arme thy selfe,
 that thou maist overcome these troubles, and learne to apply these
 thinges to an other cause without thy selfe, which is stronger then
 thou art. Now, the holy Ghost alone is that instructor which tea-
 cheth vs to cast our selues into the bosome of the diuine maiestie, &
 to trust in him, and so in his name to marry a wife, to gouerne our
 family, to rule the common weale, &c. Which thinges if they haue
 good successe, it is wel: If not, yet is it also well notwithstanding.
 For this is the will of God, that when he hath once called vs ep-
 ether to any publike office in the common weale, or the gouerning
 of a familye, we should with inuocation and prayer abide and con-
 stantly continue in the same.

And this is the principall doctrine of this Psalm: whiche the
 Papists flag in all their temples, and yet of all men they least vnder-
 stand those thinges whereof it treateth. For they flie both ciuill
 and household government, and yet are they bound in both: yea
 no man is there in more busie then they are. For the Pope & his re-
 ligious rabble haue taken vpon them most impudently to gouerne
 great monarches and Princes, and the cases and controuersies of
 matrimony haue bene iudged and determined by Officials and
 Commissaries. Also they haue ruled by their priuate & auricular
 confession both families, kingdoms and Empires. Thus it came
 to passe that both kindes of life were in a maner betterly abolished.
 For they condemned all those that liued vnder þe ciuill government
 and in matrimony, as secular or worldly kindes of life; and coun-
 selled them to enter into monasteries & to their monkish religion:
 like vnto the heathen Philosophers, whiche commended þe priuate
 & solitary life aboue all other: that is to say, that kind of life which
 hathen doe neither in matrimony nor any affaires of the common weale.

This wicked life of the Papistes & the heathen Philosophers
 God condemneth in the holy Scripture, wherein we see, to our
 great comfort, that there was neuer yet any holy man which hath
 nor bene exercised in the affaires either of pollicke or household go-
 uernment. For God did call into the courts of Princes most ex-
 cellent & holy personages, as Elias, Heliseus, Elisha, Daniel, &c.
 & say nothing of the holy Kings, as Dauid, Salomon, &c.

The Papists
 did condene
 ciuill gouern-
 ment & ma-
 trimony as
 worldly
 kindes of
 life.

Mark 6. 10.

others. God would also that Iohn the Baptist should be a Countrey and of the Kings counsell, as the text saith: VVhen he heard of Iohn he did many things. So the Lorde hath alwayes exercised his Sainctes and holy seruantes with the affaires either of ciuill or household gouernment, Christ onely excepted, who was the wisdom of the father. He neither married, nor bare rule in common wealth. For it behoued him to be a singular personage about all others, and yet he honoied both kinds of life, that is, both marriage and ciuill gouernment.

The idle belied Monkes would haue nothing to doe with ciuill or household affaires

The life therefore of the Monkes, and the whole rable of the popish religious orders is altogether deuillish, in that they will haue nothing to doe with ciuill or household affaires. And in deed they doe wisely, which seke rather to liue in ease, quietnes & pleasure, with the name and opinion of holynes; then to be turmoiled and vexed with the miserable cares and calamities wherof the life of man is full. They choose that which is most sweete and pleasant, and leaue the yegges, the great cares and troubles of bringing vp children, of guiding a familie, of gouerning the common wealth and such like, vnto others. Like as also with their hypocisie they haue deceiued the whole worlde, and so snared the consciences of those which liued either in matrimonye, or in the pollicie state, that they executed those functions and duties against their willes, whereunto they were called of God. For if a married man

The Monkes could nerther teach nor comfort me in their necessities.

or a Magistrate complained vnto them of the troubles either of their household or ciuill affaires, they did not onely not comfort or encourage them patiently to beare those burthens, but perswaded them to forsake those godly kindes of life and to enter into Monasteries: yea they went so farre, that when they dyed, they buried them in a Friers coule: They knew not that matrimony and ciuill gouernment are ordained and created of God. They knewe not that such should rather haue bene exhorted to patience, comforted and taught that God had appoynted them to liue in the state of matrimony and to serue the common wealth; that their vocation was of God and pleased God, and therefore they ought not to haue forsaken these kindes of life, but if any troubles hapned they ought to haue borne them patiently for Gods cause; & to commend themselves and their affaires wholly vnto God. Thus should many consciences haue bene instructed and comforted. But this could the Papistes neuer doe. The cause wherof is, for that they haue no

practice or experience of these matters: they have but onely an idle and a naked speculation thereof, and moreover, they are destitute of the holy Ghost. But Salomon hath both the one and the other: that is to say, experience both of politike and household government, and also the holy Ghost. By these schoolmasters he learned that the affaires of men cannot be governed by their owne policie and wisdom, but that all thinges are ruled and guided by the wisdom of God.

Naaman Syrus brought into the common wealth, not onely great wisdom, but the text saith, that he was given for the deliverance of Syria: that is to say, his greates wisdom had bene profitable if God had not geuen good successe thereunto. So if any man become a good Prince or a good Magistrate, he hath not this by the gift of nature, by his good bringing up, or by learning, but it is the singular gift of God. And this doth experience afterwards teach, when thinges come oftentimes to passe contrary to mans expectation. The same hapneth also to the married man.

Naaman Syrus.

For howe often doe his deuises and purposes come to nothing? True it is therefore that is commonly said, man purposeth but God disposeth: and that which Salomon saith, The heart of man purposeth his way, but the Lorde guideth his steppes. Thou art in distress and devise with thy selfe by what meanes and policie thou maist bring thy self out of trouble: but thy purpose is disappointed by the same deuises and policies wherunto thou didst trust, thou hurtest thy selfe and overthrustest thine owne cause. This bringeth great impatience. Learne therefore that by thine owne wisdom & policie, thou art not able to rule thine owne house: how then shouldst thou be able to governe the bodyes and the mindes of other in any one house, title of common wealth? As Jeremy

Proverb. 16.

Jerem. 16.

saith: The way of man is not in him selfe, neither is it in man to walke and to direct his steppes. So this body which thou hearest about is not in thine owne handes. This is the true manner of teaching, as touching ciuill and household government, namely to shew the efficient and the final cause thereof. And this doctrine is so much the more necessary, for that we are all vnder the one of these two governments. For although thou be not a married man, yet must thou needes be in some part of the household government. For either thou art a sonne, a daughter, a seruant, or thou hast seruants or neighbours, or else thou

Doctrine concerning ciuill & household government.

are in some place and calling in the house or in the societie of men. Whose it cannot be supposed, but that many things will happen vnto thee in thy vocation, both tedious and grieuous. Therefore thou must learne how to behaue thy selfe in these kindes of life, also from whence they come, and to what end they are ordayned. But of all others, they haue most neede of this knowledge which are placed in authoritie or any kinde of life aboue others, to whom it belongeth to rule either in a common wealtie or to gouerne a family, & they may know what is the end of their rule & government.

This Psalm
constraineth
the summe
and effect of
the booke of
the Ecclesi-
astes of Salo-
mon.

Eccle. 2. 12.

This Psalm therefore properly pertaineth to Salomons Ecclesiastes, and not only containeth the same doctrine, but in a manner the same wordes also. In Ecclesiastes he saith: I haue seene vanities: that is, I haue seene that there hath bene no successe either in householde or in politike government, but vexation of spirit was in them both. Wherefore there is nothing better for a man then to reioyce in God, and to doe good in his life as much as he is able. This Psalm therefore seemeth to be, as it were a briefe summe of that booke, whereby he teacheth both what is the efficient cause of politike and householde government, and also to what ende they must be directed. He teacheth that we are but Gods instruments and workmen, and are not the efficient but the instrumentall cause whereby God worketh these things. As Wisdom is felt sayth: By my kings rule. So the father is the instrument of generation, But God is the fountaine and author of life. Likewise the Magistrate is but the instrument whereby God maintaineth peace and politike lawes. The husband and wife are the instruments whereby both house & goods are preserved. The knowledge hereof bringeth great consolation. For if matters fall out other wise, if we do not attaine to the ende wherunto they were appoynted, we may saye: I am but an instrument, and these things are not in my power, but in a gentles of a greater and an higher power. Therefore if my wife dye, if my childrean dye, if any other trouble, affliction or calamitie happen: I saye: These things are not in my hand, I am but onely as an instrument, I doe all that I can. I labour and reuel, I am carefull and vigilant, but the Lord in whose hands all these things are, giue good successe: or else all my ende is in vaine. All my labour is in vaine. For if the first cause be lacking, the second cause can doe nothing. And thus teacheth this Psalm as touching the efficient cause.

In the manner it is written also concerning the house builded by the map of the world that all things are the gift of God, and pertaineth to the glory and the service of God, & not to our own glory and our own pleasure: So that we ought to say, thus hath the Lord done: he hath given this happenend: To him therefore be praise and glory for ever. Amen.

Verse. 1. Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it.

These are words of great force and power, whereby he generally condemneth all our labour & travail, declaring that it is not the efficient cause of those commodities for the which we travail. Here view and consider all the histories, both holy and profane, of all nations, and ye shall see that God gave such a gift unto man, that they began to rule both common wealthes and families with great commendation. But when they saw that there followed no good successe, they were bitingly discouraged, & often times for their great care & travail, they gained nothing else but extreme ingratitude. How many excellent men in the common wealth of Athens, have many times engaged the Lacedaemonians how many in the common wealth of Rome were condemned & cast into exile by the thankfull citizens? Yea this is generally the condition of all men which in their vocation, whether it be private or publique, endeavour to live uprightly, and carefully travail to doe good in the common weale, that they being hindered by the malice & deceitful practices of others, can never bring to passe that they take in hand. For what can devillish so many letts, stirred by so many enemies, such hatred & conspiracies against them, that either they are overcome with impatience and so cast away all care of the common wealth, or being moved with great indignation, they become cruel against those whom they see to withstand their proceedings. Thus either of a desperate mind they forsake all, or with crueltie and tyranny they will rule all. But let vs learne to keepe a meane: and if God have called vs to the government of a familie, let vs say: O Lord, thou hast given me a wife, house, and children: Over these by thy authority I am made a ruler: I will doe therfore what in me lieth, that all things may be well governed: If they have not such successe as I desire, I will write, Patience. But if they come well to passe and take good successe, then

The small cause of ciuill and household government.

Many wise and polinke gouerners, deserving well of the common wealth, haue bene euill viced, condemned and cast into exile.

We must walke in the middle way, and keepe a meane.

Handed I say, sheweth and praise be vnto thee O Lord. It is not my
 worthy, but the gift alone. And such should be vnto which is called
 in any office in the common wealth, which hath scarce more need
 of this holy counsell, because of the great troubles and traueles
 which he must susteyne. He that is able thus to doe, shall liue qui-
 etly in matrimonie and in the gouernment of the common wealth
 and shall enjoy the comfort and tranquillitie of heart and conscience
 in the middes of all dangers and calamities.

They that
 enter into a-
 ny publike
 office, or in-
 to matrimo-
 nie, must be-
 ginne with
 inuocation
 and calling
 vpon God.

Wherefore this I often teach, and this counsell I giue, that
 such as enter into any office in the common wealth, or into matrimo-
 nie, should begin with inuocation of Gods holy name and pray-
 er: So that who so euer would marry a wife, should earnestly call
 vpon God and craue his helpe, that he would not onely giue him
 a good wife, but also that he would gouerne and direct the whole
 course of his life. For when this is neglected, he directlye a wife
 vpon hope that he shall haue such a one as his new loue doth ima-
 gine. But afterwards, when it falleth out otherwise, so that he
 doth some fault in his wife, or she some other trouble hapneth, then
 either he, he commeth a lion in his owne house (as Salomon saith),
 and is sorry for that he hath done, or else neglecteth his familie, be-
 gynneth one way and his wife another, and so he wasteth all that he
 hath. For when he seeth that all thinges which he thought should
 haue had most happy successe, fall out cleane contrary to his expec-
 tation, he rageth and lamenteth all the fault in matrimonie, but most
 unchaungably. For thy fault and thy folly it is, which so doeth. And
 thou wilt needes be the efficient cause of the gouerning and guid-
 ing of thy familie: which thing God hath not giuen vnto thee.
 For thou shouldest haue bene but onely the instrument all thereof.

Godly Magi-
 strates and
 married folke
 howe they
 ought to vse
 them selues.

Wherefore submitte thy selfe rather to an other master and go-
 uerner and say: O Lord, teach thou me, that I may rightly go-
 uerne my familie, execute my office in the common wealth, &c.
 Rule thou and be thou my helper, that I offend not: for I will doe
 that in me lieth. If I take good successe, I will acknowledge a thy
 gift, thank thee and praise thy name. If I succede not, yet will I
 beare it with patience. For thou art the first cause, and I am but
 the second cause: thou art the creator, thou art all in all and work-
 est all, and I am but the instrument. If I live with peace and without
 thus prepared wouldst make a gouerner, all thinges would prosper
 and happily proceed. But now, whether ye behold the Pagiturne

oꝛ new married persons, ye shall see great presumption. For they so be gonne all thinges that they take in hande, as though it were impossible they should come otherwise to passe then they themselves doe imagine. They begin as though they were the first and the efficient cause, and appoynt such an ende to their deuises and enterprises as serueth to their owne gloꝛy and pleasure. But God sayth. Thus shalt thou not doe, for then shalt thou perishe. And woꝛthely: For they are rebells and blasphemers which will presume vpon that which belongeth to the first cause alone. For when eyther the pen will teach the scribe how to write, oꝛ the axe wil teach the carpenter how to square his timber, nothing can be wel done. And euen so is it in this case, when we will take vpon vs such gouernment as belongeth to God alone. It is expedient for you to consider the examples of this great folly, which are to be seene euery where abundantly in Princes Courts, in cities, and families. For thus doe they thinke: I am the authoꝛ and master of this familie, this policie, this gouernment, &c. Holle woꝛthely therefore are they troubled and vexed when there followeth no such success as they looked for. And herevpon followeth (as I said) eyther a miserable confusion both in houthold and politike gouernment, oꝛ else playne tyranny. So in matrimony, if neither the husband will beare with his wife, noꝛ the wife will giue place to her husband, not onely the mutuall loue and concoꝛd in matrimony is broken, but also it so falleth out, that the husband is chaunged into a tyranne, oꝛ else he neglecteth and forsaketh all together.

What must we here doe? The Hope answereth and giueth this counsell, that we should flie into some solitary place, oꝛ into some monastery. Not so, saith the holy Ghost: This is not the counsell of God, but of the deuill. But thus do thou. Consider that thou art Gods instrument, & beleue that there is yet an other magistrate and principall gouernour of the house, whose name is the Lord. Except he be the principall cause, it shall followe, as this psalme saith, that the house shall not be builded, and that neither politike noꝛ householde gouernment shall prosper. So must we iudge also of the finall cause. If thou wilt referre all things to that ende which thou hast imagined, and thinkest that thou shalt not be deceiued, thou erreſt, as experience teacheth. One man taketh vpon him an office in the common wealtch, to get estimation and dignitie, and findeth the contrary. An other by matrimony

The principall master of the houthold & magistrate is God.

seeketh pleasure, seeketh a bewisfull and obedient wife, but he is deceiued and proueth also the contrary. And well woꝛthp. For why doest thou pꝛesume to rule either in politiike oꝛ household gouernment as a God, and thinkest that thy wisdom and thy policy are able to gouerne these thinges, and that thou hast no neede to lift vp thine eyes to him which is aboue and to desire his helpe? When thou seest therfore that afterwarde it falleth out otherwise, then doest thou learne to sing this psalme. Except the Lord builde the citie they labour in vaine that builde it. Before thou thoughtest that there was no other Lord oꝛ gouerner besides thy selfe, of whose help thou shouldest haue need to gouerne thy house. Others which are not come to this knowledge, either are at continuall debate with their wiues, oꝛ else they forsake both wiues & families and flie away, Woꝛthely, woꝛthely, iustly and by the iudgement of God thus commeth it to passe. For why doest thou being but vile dunge, pꝛesume as a God, to take vppon thee that heauenly gouernment, that (I say) which is aboue nature, with a naturall affection and earthly minde? Thy clymyng and pꝛesumptuous spirite therfore God iustly confoundeth. Why doest thou not rather say on this wise: Lorde thou hast giuen me a wife, childeꝛen, a familie: assist me and helpe me: Gouerne thou and guide them, oꝛ else in vaine is all my trauell. Nowe, soꝛ as much as the holy Scripture teacheth vs, and experience also agreeth thereunto, that without Gods helpe all is in vaine that we take in hande, therfore we ought not to be ignorant of these thinges.

They labour in vaine (saith he) which builde it. The cause is this, that either they become tyrannes, oꝛ else desperate & forsake all togither. So commeth to ruine both politike and household gouernment. Now, what madnes is this, so to rule, that either thou oꝛ thy family must perishe? Why doe we not rather as the holy Ghost here teacheth vs, that we may pꝛeserue both? Which is, if we learne to knowe the pꝛincipall cause and the true master and gouerner of the house, if we call vppon him, trust in him and say: Thou Lord hast created me to be a ruler of a familie, and hast giuen me those thinges which pertaine thereunto. But this burden is to heauy for me to beare. Therfore take vpon thee my charge. O Lorde, gouerne thou in my steede: be thou the maister of the house, for I will humbly giue place vnto thee. Then wilt God heare thee, and he will say: All this will I doe, so that thou canst be

God the true
master of the
householde.

be content if any thing happen otherwise then thou doest desire, willingly to beare it and with patience to ouercome it, and not to despair of the ende and good successe thereof, forsaking thy vocation to the which I haue called thee. For since thou doest call vpon me, and doest thankfully acknowledge those things which I haue giuen thee, therefore will I preserve thee and thy familie. Wherefore if troubles happen, somewhat thou must beare, and yet must thou not therfore feare that all things wil come to ruine. What state of gouernment was moze miserable then the gouernment of Dauid? and yet it continued until Christ was borne and came therof. Wherefore, what things so euer seeme to be lacking, do thou also commit and commend the same vnto me as the Creator and principall gouernour of all.

Dauids household gouernment most miserable.

So teacheth this verse, especially concerning ciuill gouernment. And here marke the vehemencie of these wordes: they labour in vaine. For hereof commeth either crueltie and tyranny (as is sayd) or else a confusion of all things, and either they forsake their office and vocation, or else they presume and wil rule all alone, they wil labour without the Lord, that is to say, they wil rule by their owne wisdom & policie and wil be the principal and efficient cause. Therefore Cicero, Iulius, and others most excellent, wise & politike men were ouerthrowne: which notwithstanding if all things had had prosperous successe, woulde perhaps haue fallen into tyranny. For such as are in authoritie and gouern with great successe, are not lightly boyd of tyranny.

They labour in vaine that labour without the Lorde.

Now, as touching the grammaticall sense and meaning of the wordes, I thinke ye know that to edifie signifieth not in this place to gather together a heape of tymber and stones, but generally all that pertaineth to the house and the whole familie, as to rule and gouerne, to marry a wife, to beget children, to bring vp children, to nourish the household, to prouide things necessary for the same, &c. So that the building is here taken for the house well ordered, where are good parents and fruitfull, which liue in great loue & concord together, which haue obedient children, wherof springeth by godly youth and then good men. This is the house builded of parents, children, and a well ordered familie: which is a singular blessing and gift of God. But otherwise men so liue that albeit the master of the house commaund neuer so much, yet is there none that wil obey him. And this is a ruinous house and a miserable

To build.

The building

gouernment.

To labour.

Thus to labour, is to weary thy selfe: and so to gouerne in all thinges after thine owne will, wisdom, and policie, that no fault be committed, that euery one in thy familie doe his duety in all poynts diligently and vprightly, that thou susteyne no losse or hinderance in thy goods or otherwise, thus to gouerne (sayth he) is not to saue and to pferue, but to destroy & cast away. What way then must thou take that thy labour be not in vayne? Euen this, cherefully & gladly to doe what in thee lyeth with all thy strength, witte and policie, committing thy selfe and thine, with all thy affaires vnto God, and to trust in him, who made thee a husbando, gaue thee a wife, children, a house, &c. If all thinges prosper and happily succede, giue thanks vnto God, who with these gifts hath so blessed thee. If any thing happen otherwise, overcome it with patience what so euer it be: and thus thinke with thy selfe, that God tryeth and proueth thee, whether thou take him to be the true master and gouerner of the house, from whom alone come all good thinges: or whether thou doest attribute the same vnto thine owne wisdom and policie. This is therefore the true wisdom of the holy Ghost, that neither can the house be builded, nor the citie kept by the endeavour, wisdom, power or strength of man.

To labour in vayne.

But in vayne are all these thinges taught, and are as a tale told to a deffe man. For the world being both blind and deffe, both, as alwayes it is wont, that is to say, cleane contrary to this doctrine. Wherefore this Scripture is set forth for the instruction of that little number which are godly and beleue in Christ: which suffer them selues to be taught and instructed in the Lord. Others embrace the pleasures of this world and worldly thinges, and thinke they belong to them alone, and may be gouerned by their wisdom and policie. Therefore it cometh to passe, that they gaine nothing thereby but vexation and misery, and in the ende confusion and destruction. And albeit hereof they haue continuall experience and heare it daily, notwithstanding they are neuer the better.

Vers. 1. Except the Lorde keepe the citie the keeper watcheth in vayne.

Like as before he called the house such thinges as pertaine to the

to the house & household-gouernment, & matrimony it selfe: so here he calleth the citie a common wealth, whether it be a kingdom; a dukedom, a citie, or else any common societie, be it great or small. Now, albeit these things seme, according to the flesh, to be vnder our gouernment, yet are they in deede farre above our power. And every godly minde must be taught to knowe that in some parte of this gouernment either priuate or publike, he is as an instrument of God. Wherefore we must looke vnto God, and assure our selues that all things are wrought, all things come to passe by Gods only prouidence and appoyntment, aboue and beyond all that we can thinke & imagine. He that will not beleue this, shal receaue the reward which is here set forth: to wit, that at his endeavour, his counsel, his policie, his wisdom and all his labour shall be in vayne.

He sayth not: Except the Lord build the citie, as he did before of the house: but he sayth: Except the Lord keepe the citie. For when the house is wel gouerned, then shal it go well with the common wealth. For household gouernment is the founteyne of y^e common wealth. If father, mother, husb^{and} & wife be lacking which shoulde bring forth children, nourish them and bring them vp, there can be no common wealth. Of a house therefore is made a citie, which is nothing els but many houses & families, of cities is made a dukedom or a shire: of dukedoms or shires is made a kingdom, which ioyneth all these in one. Of all these, household gouernment is the founteyne & headspring: which was begun of God him selfe in Paradise, where he sayd: It is not good for man to be alone: Also, bring forth frute and multiply. Salomon therefore doth not here teach howe common wealthes shoulde be planted & lawes ordeyned. For these were graffed in nature at the beginning: For so sayth the text: Let vs make man after our owne image: And afterward he expoundeth what is ment by this image. Rule ye ouer the fishes of the sea, and ouer the foules of the ayre, and ouer euery beast that moueth vpon the earth. Here it appeareth that at the beginning there was planted in man by God him self, a knowledge of his creatures & a law how to rule & gouern them, a knowledge of husb^{and}ry, of physicke, and of other artes & sciences. Afterward men of excellent wit, by experience & great diligence did encrease those gifts which they had by nature. And this is but the strength of humane wisdom created in man at the beginning in Paradise. Wherefore y^e holy Ghost careth not for these things: only

The good gouernment of households and families, is the founteyne and headspring of the common wealth.

Household gouernment was begun of God in Paradise.

Artes and sciences and such other gifts God approueth as necessary for mans life otherwise he regardeth them not, & therefore man hath no cause to glory in them.

he doth approue them as excellent gifts and treasures necessary for mans life, and sayeth: All these thinges are of my creation. Whereouer he goeth about here to rase vp the blinde and decaped nature of man, and to call vs from all trust and confidence in flesh, to the ende we should not attempt any thing aboue our power, nor attribute any thing vnto our selues. For by the fall of Adam nature is so corrupt, that it cannot see the good gifts of God to be gifts in deede: but the politike heade thinketh that he enioyeth all thinges by his owne wisdom and policie: he looketh not backward, nor glorifieth God, but sayeth: this haue I done. But this doing is in deede an vtter vndoing.

Wherefore, seeing that common wealthes and families are ordeyned already, seeing that lawes, artes, and sciences by the ordinaunce of God were at the first created together with man: the nature of man doth wickedly abuse them in that it sayeth: I will doe, I will gouerne, and I will bring these thinges to this ende, to this perfection, whereby I will procure mine owne quietnes, glopy and pleasure. With this presumption God is highly offended, and therefore he geueth no successe thereunto. And good cause why. For as he made the Sunne that thou shouldst haue the vse of it, and not to the ende thou shouldst rule it: so he gaue thee ground that thou shouldst till it, but not to the end it should bring forth what and how much thou wouldest haue, but what and how much he would giue. So he gaue thee witte, reason, a wife, a family and other thinges. But this is euermore the peruersenes of mans nature, corrupt through the sinne of Adam, that it will not acknowledge the gifts of God. Of Gods gifts it ought to say, with thankes giuing, This I haue receiued, but proudly & blasphemously it saith: This I haue done. It ought to say: This hath my Lord God giuen me: but it sayeth: this haue I gotten, & I will gouerne & mainteyne it by mine owne wisdom.

It is the Lord then which buildeth the house, which giueth a wife, children, liuing, which kepeth the city, giueth publike peace, mainteyneth lawes, &c. Wherefore these words Except the Lord, should be written with great letters, yea with golden letters, because the nature of man fighteth against them (and that through the sinne of the fall of Adam) in that we attribute all thinges vnto our selues: and those thinges which we ought to ascribe vnto God, we take and enioy as if they were our owne. And to this Satan

also

also stirreth vpp our corruption, which of it selfe is inclined thereunto. Therefore it followeth that our desires and enterprises are void of all good successe, and we our selves are neuer quiet. If this vice of presumption were not, we should finde much more quietnes and haue better successe in all our doings. For God would speake vnto vs: Thou takest me for the onely treator and geuer of those things which thou enioyest: therefore wil I blesse thee. But because we doe not so, he ouerwhelmeth vs with many miseries and calamities: he letteth the deuill loose, & setteth hell open (as it were) against vs: so that in householde gouernment great troubles are stirred vp, and in the common weale warres & manslaughter. For since we will not heare him teaching and warning by the word, he will teach vs with scourges & with our owne calamities, that like vnto the Phygians we shoulde learne to be wise by our owne harmes, and knowe that we are not Lords & gouerners of these things. So Cicero at y^e last was compelled thus to say: Alas, I was yet neuer wise. And yet some time I was esteemed to be that which in deed I was not: but in vaine. O people of Rome, how much hath thine opinion which thou diddest conceaue of me, deceaued thee? For he so gouerned the people of Rome by his owne wisdom and policie; that at the last he lost his heade. This is our corruption (which we haue by the first and original sinne of Adam). When we will not acknowledge the Lord giuing and gouerning, but doe all things without his feare, and with a trust and confidence in our own strength. So in householde gouernment it falleth out that he giueth to some proude yong man a faire wife, which is either a harlot or else vnapt to all good huswifery & householde affaires, whereby she is a perpetuall burden vnto her husband. The like hapneth also to princes, rulers and Magistrates in the common weale: so that none can winde them selues out of those troubles which by their owne folly they fall into: A worthy plague and punishment. For why will they haue God to be a geuer, when they them selues will be the builders and gouerners? But the word, although it heare these things, neither careth for them nor yet beleueth them.

These wordes therefore are spoken onely vnto the godly: Except the Lord keepe thee, the citie, the watchmen keepe it in vaine. As if he said: The Lord is the keeper, and if he be not present, what so euer is doone in the common weale, is but in vaine.

I. ii.

The words
of Cicero.

Marke what
it is to rule
and gouerne
without
God.

Martinus
Sangerhau-
sen.

When I was a student at Erford, I heard this saying of a certain wise and learned man called Martinus Sangerhausen: that Erford should continue invincible as touching riches and strong munitions: but the time should come when that strong and riche common wealth should lack men. This was a wise saying. Wherby he signified that common wealthes are not maintained through wealth, riches and power, if godly & expert gouerners be lacking. Let men build the as much as they will, and let them fortifie their cities if they can with yron walls: let them heape together mountaines of golde, yet shall all these thinges be but in vaine without godly gouerners. First of all therefore this must God worke, that the citizens and people may be godly and fearing God: Forcoure that the Magistrates may be both godly and expert men: Also that the Princes and higher powers may be such as serue God & feare God, & such as loue & reuerence his worde. These are true, strong & mighty fortifications of kingdoms & common wealthes. When God hath giuen these munitions, then may men deuise also strong walls & ditches. But because this is not done, therefore kingdoms and Empires are ouerthrowne one after an other. And I am of this opinion, that Empires, kingdoms, & common wealthes had prospered & continued much longer, if Monarches & Princes had omitted this pronounce [I]: that is to say, if they had not bene proud through the confidence which they had in their own strength and wisdom. But now, when the King of Babylon Nabuchodonosor lifting vp him self in pride & presuming of his own strength said, This haue I done, he liued seven yeres together with grasse; and wandred in the fieldes, like a brute beast. So the kingdoms of the Persians, of the Grecians & of the Romanes were destroyed and brought to nought. When they vaunted, & gloried in themselves saying: I haue done, by and by followed, I am vndone. Behold and consider all the Monarches, Princes & common wealthes that euer were, and ye shall see that when they added to their actes & enterpises this proud bragge [I haue done] they were destroyed, because they shut God out as a foole through this presumption and set them selues in his place. Thus all the wisdom, policies and strength of man faileth and commeth to nothing. We also at this day should not lack walls and other munitions, if men were not lacking: Of whome there is nowe greate scarcitie: And they which gouerne & are in authoritie, they specially cannot be content

The true munitions and fortifications of common welthes.

Daniel. 4.
The cause of the destruction of great kindoms & Monarchies.

with

with their stone state, but swell and waxe proud through localit
and power: They trust to their strong munitions and fortifica-
ons, as though it were impossible for God to overthrow them and breake
in peeces even yron walls and mounteyns of gold.

I say not this as though cities and common wealths ought not
to be defended and fortified, lawes mainteyned, and publike. disci-
pline receyved: but this addition we condemne, that they wryte in
their foreheads this pronounce [I]. This addition [I] God nei-
ther will nor can suffer. But because the world can not omitt it
nor forget it, therefore one kingdome is destroyed after an other,
one Prince after an other, and one common wealth after an other.

So in Esay Sennacherib gloryeth of his mighty and invincible
power against God: Whereupon followeth that notable slaugh-
ter of his whole army, and he him selfe also is slayne of his owne
sonnes. Of Syrus also the text sayth: I have holden his right hand

Esay. 37.

to breake open the brasen barres. For there is no force or vio-
lence so great, no munitions so strong, but God is able to overcome
it, how easie a matter is it for him (thinke ye) to bring the wealthi-
est and richest common wealths in the world, to extreme povertie
by warre, famine, pestilence, &c. These munitions then must be
provided, the house must be buyle, a wyfe married, & the household
gouverned. These thinges the holy Ghost doth not condemne, but

Esay. 45.

would that we should neither addre originall sinne. Preserve
the creature therfore and vse it, but away with that which is thine
owne, originall sinne I meane, whereby thou offendeest God. The
creatures are thy wyfe, child, family and goods. These are good
thinges and the good giftes of God, the vse wherof God hath lent
unto vs. But thou addrest thereto thy originall sinne, and wilt take
vpon thee to gouerne them by thine owne wisdom, condemning
God, and not calling vppon him or beleuing in him who hath gi-
uen these thinges vnto thee. Thou walkest carelesly in this pre-
sumption and sayest: I am he that ruleth these matters: There-
fore it followeth as a iust plague, that thy wyfe, thy child, and
family are disobedient. Such good may it doe you master gouer-
ner, which will presume to rule these matters, not calling first vpon
God.

The same also hapneth in ciuill gouernment. Therefore (sayth
the Psalm) Except the Lord keepe the citie, &c. Here the Pro-
phet setteth the Lord agaynst our originall sinne and agaynst our

A. iii.

naturall presumption: As if he should say: This say I: that the re-
 ceit kept in daime excepts the Lord keepe it. But there is another
 I say an other gouernour which will rule these matters: that is to
 say, our wisdom and presumption, which neglecting God, presu-
 meth to gouerne these great and weighty matters; and excludeth
 God. And in veredie prospereth some times: But this is a
 shew of Gods great wrath when hee getteth successe to the wis-
 ked: For it is an offence and a stumbling blocke unto the godly,
 and also a snare to many other, which seeking to atchieue the like
 thinges, take vppon them the like gouernment: but all in vaine.
 And Augustus Caesar in gouerning the commonwealth had great
 successe: He escaped the ouerthrowes and terrible ruines of ma-
 ny other Kinges as touching his owne person: albeit as touching
 his subiects; his gouernment was most unhappie. Others by
 his example take vpon them to rule the common wealth and looke
 to haue the like successe: but see howe fewe there be that doe en-
 ioy it: These thinges I write to the ende we may learne that we
 are not the rulers and gouernours of these high and weighty mat-
 ters; chail and household gouernment I meane: much lesse of the
 Church of God where all thinges, without comparison, are of
 greater importance and of much more difficultie.

The successe
 of y wicked.

To keepe,
 what it signi-
 feth.

To keepe is to blisse, mainteyne & preserue. And here bespe-
 keth not (as I sayd before) of making and ordeyning lawes. For
 those he presupposeth to be established in the common wealth al-
 ready. But he admonisheth and teacheth y Magistrates to call vpon
 God and to execute their office & dutie in the feare of God. And
 if their labors and traueils do not prosper as they would; let them
 thinke that God doth it to tryde their presumption and to humble
 them. For if all thinges should succede as they would, it shoulde
 be an occasion of infinite euills and enuities. But when they see
 that their wisdom preuaileth not, their policie is disapointed,
 their power and authoritie taketh no place, then doe they learne
 by their owne experience, that there is another Lord and mas-
 ter to be called vppon and taken as the principall gouernour of
 the common wealth, who will helpe them, will gouerne for them;
 and geue good successe to that they take in hand, that so they may
 lie to prayer, and say: helpe Lord, take vppon thes our charge
 and burthen, and gouerne thou for vs. Also that they may knowe
 they haue a large promise, that God being called vppon, will
 heare

heare them and helpe them. This clause then Except the Lord keepe the cite, is against them which saye they will prosper by their owne wisdome, presume to build the house and keep the citie. To them it is said, that they shall labour & watch in vaine.

The keeper he calleth a King, a Prince, a Magistrate. For a litle word he comprehendeth the greatest and highest matters in the world. For God is a great & mightie God, who hath charge in mouth, and with final word he terereth unto this world the matters of peace and Magistrates therefore he calleth keepers, which are appointed and ordained to gouerne common wealthes. But they watch in vaine (saith he) except the Lord whom he left with them, and their trauells take no such effect as they would: but if the Lord be absent, they doe nothing else but to sinne, and crucifie themselves in vaine. I haue seene some which haue tryed themselves day and night with continuall labour, and yet were they not able to line thereby. They spent no time in idleness, no time in play: notwithstanding they liued miserably with their wives and children. Others pitying their case, admonished them by this continuall example of Haman, who was rich: yet before the piety of the king, he was hanged. Industrie with their sinners is so, should they the sooner determine to that which they sin painfully together. For a matter of a household in which there is some industrie, can doe more with one peece of gold, then some other can doe with two. A woman skillfull of household affaires, industrie is a prouident with al, and thus with her family can be in possession of that which she laboureth in other men may not so industrie, prouident and discret, is not able to endure halfe a yeare. For industrie hath alwaies been successful. But they themselves which gave this counsel to those poore men, who see that industrie is also the gift of God. Note the cause why industrie so greatly helpeth and bringeth forth success to our ende- uours and labours; is, for that it obserueth the circumstances of persons, places, convenient times, & other occasions, that nothing be done in vaine, nor labour to loss.

These things be that with we obserue in household and politike gouernment, much of necessity be many times required. No marvell is it then, that great riches are made so suffice, a man in whom this industrie is lacking, that which doth not with discretion please & consider the things & causes before mentioned. These men therefore, youe this counsell, that industrie should be ioyned with labour, because labour with

Kings, Princes and Magistrates, the Prophet calleth keepers.

To labour in vaine.

* Industrie is such a labor & diligence, as is ioyned with a prouident care, & discretion, in obseruing of persons, places, convenient times, with other circumstances, so that no labour be spent in vaine.

Labour without industry hath no good success.

A. iiii.

out industrie hath no successe. But Salomon teacheth us properly, not that industrie; but that the Lord himselfe is the cause: for euen this also is the gift of God, though industrie to gouerne the common wealch, and to doe nothing rashly, but to obserue all occasions, and to seeke all opportunities that all thinges may be done in conuenient time, place, and such a manner that noble Prince Friderike Duke of Saxony, Elector, he was in deed a man industrious, who said not all thinges, but did not all thinges upon a sudden, which he was able to say or doe. He dissembled many thinges, but in conuenient time and place he did moze with a word, then many other without this industrie could doe with power and great strength. Such are they which are, we onely painfull and diligent; but also industrious which can wait for occasion and time conuenient, when one word will strike and pierce moze deeply, then at an other time many swoyes could doe. But this is humane and not diuine wisdom. Therefore it is not sufficient to gouerne such high & weighty matters; but there must be prayer also to pree there with; that the Lord would be present, that he would keepe watch and ward, & else that mans industrie be all in vaine, be it neuer so great. As God teacheth this vnto us as touching the vniuersall cause (whereby all the inuencions, counsells and policies of men are ruled and directed) and keepeth vs that we make no confusion of multitude of cause, and that of the first cause we make not the second cause, by effect in deede no cause at all. For he doth not create thinges, and so leaue them (such a certaine philosopher speaking of God, and verily wel so) he doth not so ordaine multitude and chaunge of government, as the thysopight doeth the Shippe, who after that he hath directed his worke, so leaue it and committeth it to the matter to be guided as he will. But God is still present with his creature, and gouerneth both the heauens and the common wealch. This men doe not knowe, but thinke that God hath no regard of those thinges which we doe, but leaue them vnto vs. Contrary to this prophane and wicked opinion Salomon teacheth vs, that we should feare God all vpon earth, and so take in hand to gouerne our families and to serue the common wealch, as God hath appointed vs, with a cheerefull heart. As he admonisheth vs not to depend vpon our owne wisdom, policie, power, munitions or riches. All hystories are full of examples; and our owne experience also

Friderike
Duke of Sax
only a very
wise & discre
crete man.

Industrious
and prouident
men.

God is still
present with
his creature.

also doth witnesseth that presumption hath neuer good successe, and yet the world will still be the world, and doth not beleue. Therefore these things are profitable for none but for the goodly. But if the world will not heare and obey, let it rage, let it rage and torment it selfe, since it seeth and feeleth it selfe to waich, to labour, to be oppressed with continuall toyle and trauell, and all in vaine. And this doth it worthely, iustly and most iustly suffer. For here it is written, that except the Lord keepeth the citie, the keeper watcheth in vaine, and this doe they reiect: Therefore the Lord also reiecteth them: he will not keepe nor build the citie, and so what remaineth, but onely in vaine.

Verse. 2. It is in vaine for you to rise early, and to lye downe

late, and to eate the breade of sorrow, for ye shall not

enrich your selfe, neither shall ye multiply your substance.

It is in vaine (saith he) if for a man to rise early, to goe late to

bed, and with great labour to get his living: for so signifieth bread

in this place. The Hebrewes call it the bread of affliction. The

meaning then of these wordes is this: that bothe in household and

in publicke government all mans endeavour, all his care, study and tra-
uelling is in vaine except it be blessed from above. For by these kindes

of speech, to rise early, and to lye downe late, he signifieth greete

care and painful trauell. As if he saide: It is not thy strength,

thy care, thy study and endeavour that can make thee richer: but the

blessing of God maketh a man rich, &c. God will not giue successe

unto thee because of thy labour, like as he will not giue riches to

such as are tole and careless. Notwithstanding thou must labour,

and yet must thou commit and commend all to God, which blesteth

and giueth successe vnto all.

But it seemeth (as the text soundeth) that the Prophet here

forbiddeth labour, contrary to that sayinge in Genesis: In the

sweat of thy face thou shalt eate thy bread. Also of these wordes

of S. Paul: Let him that ruleth doe it with diligence. Here he

seemeth to say the contrarie: For he prohibeth that to labour,

to rise early and to lye downe late, to be careful and painfull is

but in vaine; whereas notwithstanding in other places sloth and

idleness are condemned. Here ye must make a distinction betwene

idleness and idleness, or betwene the spirit and the flesh. Truly thy

heart thou must trust in God and call vpon him: but if thou hast

The bread
of affliction.

To rise care-
ly, &c.

Rom. 10.

married a wife, or bearest any office in the common wealth; that pertaineth to the olde man, to the flesh & not to the spirit, to woorkes and not to faith. Here thou must labour and exercise the outward man: Thou must rise early and lye downe late: that is, thou must be careful as touching the outward man, how thou must provide for thy family, doe good in the common wealth, &c. but thy minde must be free and voyde of care, for care oughte to extend no farther then to the outward man onely: That is, the outward man ought not to be idle and slouthfull, but diligently to doe that which he is called vnto, in labouring, in studying, in deuiling, in providing as an instrument: So the handes must labour, but the hart must looke vpward from labour to the Lord, and craue helpe of him. So that, whyles the outward man is exercised with labour and trauel, the hart of the new man in the steepe of care and trauel, must stie to prayer and say: Lord I obey and willingly follow thy calling: I wil therefore doe all thinges in thy name: Govern thou & direct my labour. This consolation is so great, that it can not be expressed. For although no successe follow, yet art thou quiet in mind & sayest: Thus it hath pleased God; I am not the principall cause to doe what I would, but the instrument cause onely, & haue done what I could, for like as when thou breakest thy ham with thyne axe or with some other tooke in doing of thy worke, yet thy hand remaineth the same it was before and is not sacker may reuen so, although thy family be disobedient, commendeth the matter to God and doe what thou canst: then shalt thou doe both these thinges. In as God wil be wel pleased: that is, thou shalt rise early and not rise early, thou shalt labour, and yet shalt not labour in haine. For as touching the olde man thou eatest the bread of sorrowe, but thy hart is quiet and at rest in hope of succour and the blessing of the Lord.

These thinges we daily teach, and yet is the conscientiousness of men so great, that there is no ende of heaping up riches by hook or crooke, by right or wrong. Wea they wil rather miserie the iustice of God, the blessing and preaching of his wordes, then any gainfull labour. They doe not see that whyles they neglect the worde and seeke their owne gaine, they procure vnto themselves a farre greater losse, which although they doe not presently feele, yet shall it come to passe, that their riches which with so great labour they heape together, by Gods iust iudgement shall perishe.

riches

either by cheques, by warre, by fire or otherwise: or else they shall neuer come to the heyre whom they doe appoynt. But in prosperie this persuasion was deeply rooted in mens heartes, that if they had once heard a Masse, they beleued that what soeuer they tooke in hand that day, should prosper. Howe great then is our impietie, which doe not giue that reuerence to God and his word, which they gaue to their own idolatrous works? yea which preferre our owne gayne, our wealth and riches aboue God and the incomparable rich treasure of his word? Wherefore it shall come to passe, that for the punishment of this sinne, the world shall be brought to greater pouertie, and from day to day there shall be greater scarcitie of all thinges: like as we also doe see at this day that there is greater dearth of all thinges then hath bene in times past. What is the cause? Forsooth we rise early, we lye downe late, and eate the bread of affliction: We delite in earthly cares, in toyle and trauell, be it neuer so paynefull, to enrich our selues, and in the meane season we neglect God and his word. Therefore will God heape vpon vs abundantly both cares and calamities, and that most iustly, for that it is which we so greedely desire.

But I returne to the text. In the which ye see that household and ciuill gouernment are wholly committed vnto vs, but yet so that we must know and acknowledge our selues to be but Gods instruments and Gods workemen: not authours or first causes of these diuine matters. Therefore the prophet thought it not enough to say affirmatiuely: God him selfe gouerneth and maneth the citie, he buildeth the house and appoynteth the family, but he setteth downe also the negative and sayth: Ye doe it not. And this is the part of a good teacher. But (as I haue sayd) the worlde can not abide the negative. For the worlde sayth: This will I, this haue I done, and this will I doe. It will needs be the gouerner of common wealthes and rule in Gods steede. Wherefore it receaueth a iust reward in that his enterprises are all in vayne and his labours without successe: As the psalme sayth: Their dayes are consumed in vanitie: that is to say, they were deade before they could bring to passe that they wote in hande. For since they will not beleue that God gouerneth all thinges, they see their owne policie to be but vanities, their labours vnpofitable and of none effect. Let euery one of vs

Psal. 77. 33.

therfoze abyde in his degree and calling; and let vs knowe that this God requireth of vs, that we say: I helue in one God: that is, God will still be God, the creator and maker of all things, and vs he will take and account as his workemen onely; as instruments and not authoys of principall causes. But because we couet to be authoys and efficient causes, therfoze we finde nothing but wantie and bread of affliction:

This sentence must be enlarged and applied to all states and degrees of men, and not onely to artificers and men of occupation which rise earely to doe their worke. Not that it is euill to rise earely and goe late to bed, not that it is euill to be exercised with labour all the day: For these things God requireth of all men, but sloth and idleness is accursed. But we must here put a distinction betwene labour and presumption. We doth not condemne labour, but diuillish presumption he condemneth, because that we, not contented with our owne trauel and care, doe take vpon vs also Gods office and care which he hath for vs: and he will wrest from vs his diuine power and maiesty which we so presumptuously usurpe and take vpon vs: he will haue vs to labour and not to be idle: For this temptation is naturally rooted in vs, that we presume to be as gods. This diuillish presumption begaine in paradise when Satan sayd to Eue: Veshall be like gods, & it alwaies continueth fast fixed in this flesh, so that it can not be suppressed as it ought to be, and as we both teach and are taught, but needes we will be gods. This is therfoze a very naturall disease and corruption of the creature. Against this presumption, and this care, which perceyneth to the diuine maiestie alone, the holy Ghost here lighteth, when he saith, that it is not our endenour, wisdom and policie, but God him selfe that ruleth these things, and we are but his instruments. But the wicked are neuer the better. Yea the godly also doe offend herein very often. For we are not content with our owne state and condition, but we will be gouerners also, and wil appoynt the beginning, the middes and the end, as may best serue for our owne commodities. Wherefoze we tyrannise ouer selues with dayne cares night and day, as the examples of the whole worlde doe declare. One man purposeth to marie this mayden of that, and in ordering of his house, in gyrping of his familie to vse such wayes as he liketh best. But afterwarde the matter falleth out contrary to his expectation. Now his wife lyeth sick,

Labour is
not forbid-
den, but pre-
sumption is
condemned.

now

now his childzen dye, now one calamitie or an other hapneth. An other man deuileth an exact forme of governing of the common wealthe: but experience teacheth him that he is miserable decaued. All this is done (and in deede wel done) to the end thou shouldest knowe that God will not suffer thy presumption unpunished, which goest about by thine owne wisdom and policy to take from him his diuine power and maiestie. But if no trouble happen to such presumptuous and carelesse wretches, it is a manifest token that great and horrible calamities hang ouer their heades, which at length they shall seele, and shall not escape.

To be brieke, there is no kinde of life wherein ye shall not see verie many thinges come otherwise to passe then a man woulde looke for. Howe many thinges haue hapned to our aduersaries the Papistes contrary to their expectation? And of those thinges whereof they thought them selues to be most sure and certepne, what haue they brought to passe? So it hapneth to euerie Magistrate and to euerie familie, that many tymes they can not accomplish that they take in hande. What gayne they then by their policies and paynefull traueills but vanitie, in that they torment them selues without any profite, and so spende their liues that there is almost no tyme wherein they enioy a quiet minde? So shall ye haue some Princes to be most happie if they woulde quietly enioy those giftes wherewith God hath endued them. And this is the meane where by they might so doe, if they woulde commend all vnto God. But what doe they? They take vppon them those thinges which are aboue their power and not required of God, and lose that happines which they did enioy: and with these cares and traueills they afflict and torment them selues euen vnto death. And woe thely. For why doe they so arrogantly take vppon them those thinges which God requireth not at their handes, and doe not quietly enioy those thinges which they possesse? As Salomon *Eccle. 6.* sayth: There is an euill which I haue scene vnder the Sunne, and it is muche amongest men: A man to whome God hath giuen riches, and treasures, and honour, and he wanteth nothing for his soule of all that it desireth: but God giueth him not power to eate thereof; &c. For if we could be content with those thinges which we haue, and quietly vse the giftes of God, and saue our selues with our wife, our childzen, and families geuing thanks vnto God for the same, and with a good conscience doing our

butte in our vocation, what could be so happy as we? But we dot that which this verse forbiddeth. We rise early, we lye down late, we toymēt our selues, and with sorrowe we eate our bread. This is the life of man throughout the whole world, as the holy Ghost here witnesseth. The cause is, for that no man is content with his owne state. The benefites which God hath bestowed vpon vs to vse and enioy, we doe mislike. And as we doe not woe of consider our owne good gifts and commodities: so haue we a leuit and liking of other mens, and couet the like. And what haue we thereby? Vanitie of vanities, bread of affliction, vnpossi-ble care and trauel, lpyng down and rpyng vp in vaine.

The godly
are conten-
ted with that
they haue.

Wherefore the godly alone doe content them selues with those good thinges which they enioy. For they knowe that God is the giuer and gouerner of all good thinges. Wherefore they labour with an vpright heart, and those thinges which they get with their labour, they vse as the gifts of God, & do not presume to be the authors and efficient causes thereof: therefore they haue quiertnes and peace of conscience: And if any trouble happen, they can ouercome it with Iob saying: God hath giuen and God hath taken away, the name of God be blessed. So can they bothe vse the good giftes which they haue, and also ouercome all troubles and calamities. The flesh can doe neither of these, but is occupied only about such thinges as it would haue, and while it seeketh and traueleth for the same, it loseth the good thinges which presently it doth enioy: As did Esops dogge, which in snatching at the shadow, lost the flesh which he had in his sawes, and the shadow with all. This dogge therefore is an image of the whole world, when in yemayse, as it were, one master of the household, to whom God hath giuen a wife, chyldren, a family, substance, &c. These thinges are the flesh in the dogges mouth. What doth he now? The gifts which he hath, he doth not regarde, but afflicteth him selfe with other vaine cares for such thinges, as he hath not nor shall euer haue but. But these thinges can not be learned out of booke: but experyence and practise is the onely glose that interpreteth this Psalme. For I my self also doe vnderstand these matters and can teach them vnto others. Yet often times it so cometh to passe, that I weary my selfe with vaine labours and trauells. The cause is, for that the desire and presumption to be like vnto God, which is in vs, and begun in Paradise, can not be utterly taken of,

Esops dogge
which swim-
ming ouer
the water,
with a peece
of flesh in his
mouth, snat-
ched at the
shadowe of
the flesh shi-
ning in the
water, and so
lost both.

of, no not in the Saintes and childzen of God. Nowe the more a man hath of this originall payson, the lesse quietnes of minde and inward peace he hath, according to that saying of Augustine: *A wife say- ing of Au- gustine.* Thou hast commaunded Lord and so commeth it to passe, that a very vnordinate mind should be a punishment vnto it self. For like as drunkennes bringeth with it his owne punishment, that is to say, cruditie and headach: so an inordinate mind bringeth with it the bread of sorrow and labourerth in vaine.

This is it which I sayd before, that this sentence is to be vnderstand, not onely of artificers, but generally of all men in all offices and callings, that it is in vayne for them to rise early, that is to say, to be curious and carefull, and to presume of them selues in any kind of life. So the Magistrate riseth early when he hath a care that all thinges may be done as he hath determined. Likewise in all kindes of life to rise early is, when a man hath no quietnes, no time of rest from cares and trauels, vntil he obteyne that he seeketh for. But all this is in vayne. Hereof haue I seene innumerable examples, and ye shall see the like if ye liue. Young men, because they lacke experience, doe not yet vnderstand these matters. But in time ye shall see that in all states and kindes of life, in husbandmen, artificers, the learned, vnllearned, Magistrates, Kinges, Princes, ye shall see (I say) that they rise early, that is, they are carefull, they appoynt certeyne endes whereunto they direct all their deuises and policies. They make them selues efficient causes, and take vpon them to rule all thinges by their owne wisdom. This the Gentiles also did see, and therefore they sayd that fortune beareth rule in all thinges. For if wisdom were enough to bring matters well to passe, then Cicero and Demosthenes had not bene deceiued by their wise and honest policies. If wisdom and strength were sufficient, then Hector had preserued Troy, and Iulius Caesar the Romane Empire. For wisdom, power, policie, & carefulnes was not lacking in these excellent men. They rose early, they lay downe late, and did eat the bread of sorrow: notwithstanding they were deceiued and miserably perished. Therefore they were contrayned to say, that fortune ruleth in all the affayres of men, & that all thinges are done by chaunce. For commonly the wiser men they were, the more foolishly they governed in all their affaires. And true it is, that great wisdom matcheth great kingdoms. And many times (as the prouerb

Wise men
some times
committe
great folly.

These words
fortune,
chaunce,
casualty & such
like are not
vsed because
any thing
cometh o-
therwise to
passe then by
the prou-
idence of
God, but for
that many
things fall
out other-
wise then we
looked for,
& the cause
thereof we
can not see.
* The song
of fooles to
say: I had
not thought,
or, had I wist.

Wise and
mightie men
bring not to
passe that
they go a-
bout.

sayth) wise men comit no small folly. Therefore, although the Gentiles (not lightned by the word of God, but onely taught by experience) did confesse that the affaires of men are not governed by wisdom and power, yet did they still presume vpon their owne wisdom and power, and needes they woulde gouerne common wealthes by their owne counsellis and policies. But afterwarde, when they saw that there followed no successe, they acknowledged their errour and attributed all chinges vnto fortune. But we must not impute any thing vnto fortune (except we wil cal this fortune, when the counsellis, the policies and enterprises of the wise and mightie come otherwise to passe, then they them selues did purpose or determine): but to the iudgement of God, who after this maner punisheth pride, arrogancie and presumption. For why do they presume to bee wise and mightie in those thinges which are farre about the wisdom and power of man, and are not gouerned but by God alone? Why doe they not there vse their wisdom and power where as God would haue them: to witte, in those thinges that are vnder their power? which are mentioned Gen. 2. Why thely therefore are they deceiued, and crye out that all thinges are gouerned by fortune: but to late, when they haue destroyed common wealthes and kingdoms. * For this is the song of fooles, to say: I had not thought, and so to accuse fortune.

For fortune is not the cause that thy deuises and policies deuereine thee, but thine owne folly and the ignorance of God and thy selfe: First for that thou dost not vnderstand who or what thou art: Againe, thou dost not see what the commaundement of God is, and how farre forth he will haue thee to rule & gouerne. Thou begimest wick to high a note, as the Asse doth, and therefore thou makest an ill ende. When thou seest this, thou cryest out and sayest: there is no God, there is no prouidence of God: For wise and polittike Princes doe not accomplishe that which they haue most wisely deuised and determined: mightie Princes bring not that to passe, which they are able to doe as touching their strength and power. Therefore either God is vnjust, or no God at all: for else he would haue regard vnto wise men, and all thinges shoulde be done as they haue determined. O blasphemous mouth. As though God must be such a God, who when he seeth that thou hast deuised and ordered all thinges wisely, must come vnto thee and say: O Father gouerner, you haue done all thinges well: you are a wise man and

and able to gouerne without me. But thou presumptuous spirit,
 whilst thou attribuest all things to the wisdom, policie & pow-
 er of man, where is the glory and the maiestie of God? yea where
 is God him selfe if thou doest prouide, gouerne, and bring to passe
 all things? If all thinges be done by thy wisdom and power, then
 is the wisdom & power of God brought to nothing. Nay rather
 let thy wisdom, thy power and thy policie be utterly confounded
 and brought to nought, that thou mayest learne by experience, that
 the wiser a man is, the lesse able he is to accomplishe that he taketh
 in hand, yea the more foolish he is and without all successe. On the
 other side, where lesse hope is, there God giueth best successe, to
 the ende thou thoudest know that the wisdom and power wherein
 thou doest glory and trust, is nothing, and can doe no good, but ra-
 ther much hurt. Nor that God condemneth wisdom and power,
 for they are the gifts of God giuen vnto men: but this he condemn-
 eth, that men of great wisdom & power through the confidence
 they haue therein, doe exclude God from all household and ciuill go-
 uernment, and take vpon them to rule all thinges by their owne
 wisdom and power. So Cicero, Iulius Caesar, Brutus by wisdom
 & policie goe about to rule the common wealt. They thinke with
 them selues: This will I doe, Who? I Cicero, I Caesar, I Bru-
 tus. By what meanes? By mine owne wisdom, policie & power.
 This arrogancie and pride they doe not know to be sinne. After-
 wards, when they see their wise counsellors disappoynted, their deu-
 ises and policie's ouerthrowne, they become blasphemers, & thinke
 there is no God, or else that God is vniust, which giueth no ho-
 nour to vertue, no successe to wisdom. But why haue they no suc-
 cesse? Because they passe the boundes of their owne wisdom, and
 are not content that they are set as Lords & rulers over the beasts
 of the fildes, the fishes of the sea, the fowles of the ayre, & the go-
 uernment whereof God hath committed vnto man (Gen. 1.): but
 also they presume of them selues to rule mālike vnto them selues,
 house, wife, children, kingdoms, Empires, and that by their owne
 authoritie and wisdom, setting God a part, and not asking of him
 either counsell or succour.

Wherefore this verse is an image and true resemblance of the
 whole world, for what is all the world else, with all his wisdom,
 deuises and policie's, but an empty thing in vayne. Beholde the
 higher powers, Princes, Magistrates, behold the rulers and go-

The whole
 world ruled
 earely in
 vayne.

harmers of families, and ye shall see that they rise sorely, but in
 hayne. From the highest therefore vnto the lowest, the Prince
 as well as the poore hand-mayden in the house sing this song: I
 rise easily. I crye my selfe, and I eate the breade of sorrowe.
 There are very fewe lightened by God from above, which haue
 the grace to knowe them selves to be but instruments and Son to
 be the gouernour, to thinke the successe of their trauells to be the
 gift of God, and not the worke and fruite of their owne wisdom
 and policie. All the rest doe walke in the arrogancie and presump-
 tion of their owne barres, and as though they were Lordes and
 rulers ouer all thinges, they attribute all vnto their owne worke
 and wisdom. And what gayne they hereby but bitter ruine and
 destruction? So Cicero, Demosthenes and other excellent men
 in the common wealth did not offend in that they were wise; like
 as Ahas and Achab in the kingdomes of Israel did not, which
 as it appeareth, were men of great policie: but in this they sin-
 ned: because they thought those affayres and that kingdom to
 be subject vnto their wisdom. Cicero saue him selfe to be the
 onely Patron of the common wealth of Rome, and he sawe al-
 so what ought to be done and howe all thinges ought to be gover-
 ned; but because he lacked the feare of God, and imputed all to
 his owne deuises, his owne wisdom and policie, excluding God;
 therefore God woulde shewe vnto him by his owne experience,
 that wisdom and policie is not enough for the executing and ac-
 complishing of such weightie matters, but that the blessing of
 God is required from above. Therefore Cicero did not onely
 no good in the common wealth with his wise counsell and great
 wisdom, but also procured his owne destruction.

The same may we say also of worldly wealth and riches. Ri-
 ches are not euill, but they are the giftes of God, as wisdom
 is. Therefore the Lorde giueth vnto vs the vse and possession
 thereof. But when the rich man will say: these thinges are mine,
 these haue I gotten by mine owne labour and industrie, and be-
 holdeth them as his owne birth, this is euill, and is that diu-
 lish presumption and that desire to be like vnto God, the which
 our first parents, being deceiued by the Deuill, begonne in Pa-
 radise, and all we which came of them, doe bring with vs. As
 impossible therefore as it is for vs to put of this flesh which we
 carry about with vs: so impossible is it utterly to cast away this

The naturall
 presumption
 of man to be
 like vnto
 God, or to
 be as Gods.

pre

presumption and desire, to be as Gods. Notwithstanding the
 godly doe fight against it, and from day to day off they ingittie
 it more and more, untill at length it be wholly abolished, toge-
 ther with this life. The godly therefore, to whom God hath gi-
 uen worldly goodes and riches, doe say: In deede I haue wealth
 and substance, but this is not my worke, but thy blessing O
 Lord and thy gifte, which thou hast giuen vnto me by the meanes
 of my labour. But if thou haddest not giuen it, though I had
 laboured neuer so much, I shoulde haue had nothing. But the
 world sayth otherwise. I haue a faire wife, I haue sweete chil-
 dren. By whose gifte and benefite? Forsooth mine owne. Nay
 sayth the Lord: Seeing thou doest so arrogantly presume vpon
 these thinges as thine owne, thou lyest. And for a token here-
 of I will cause that thy children shall dye, or shall be defiled: that
 thy wife shall lye sicke or become an harlot, or else shall consume
 thy goods, &c. An other hath faire houses, gay and sumptuous
 buildinges. If you aske of him: how came you by these thinges?
 By whose meane? by whose deuise and policie? He answereth:
 Euen by mine owne. No, not so, sayth the Lorde, and that
 thou mayest see to be true: I will bringe to passe, that eyther
 they shall be consumed with fire, or else before thou shalt end
 them according to thy desire, thou shalt dye. An other quietly and
 peaceably governeth a common wealth, a dukedome, a kingdom.
 By whose power and policie? By mine owne, sayth he. Not so.
 And thus thou mayest see the same to be true, either sedition, warre,
 or some other trouble shall be raised by, that thou shalt wonder
 and say: who could once haue thought that these thinges shoulde
 haue come thus to passe.

The abuse
 of the giftes
 of God in
 the worlde.

Against this presumption, this psalme armeth vs, & teacheth
 every one, both Prince and people, high and low to say: My wife,
 my children, my family, my goods, the publike peace, the common
 wealth, &c. are the giftes of God. These I will be with thankfulness
 using as it shall please God and as he shall giue me the use there-
 of. If my wife or my children dye, if any trouble come either pub-
 licly or privately, I will say: O Lord, I was the possessor of these
 benefites, thou gaust them and thou hast also taken them away, I
 will therefore patiently beare this losse. Notwithstanding, the pos-
 session hereof could not alwaies haue continued, &c. I mind this
 thing instructed that be well able, cheerfully to beare all aduersi-
 ties.

At ti.

sties; which the wicked are constrained to suffer with great anguish and sorowe. But they heare not these thinges: Therefore they finde & feele that to be most true which this psalme sayth: It is in vaine for you to rise early: Yea they are their owne tormentors and their owne deulls, which miserably bere & torment them selves, but altogether in vaine. For why doe they not harken and giue eare vnto the word? Beholde therfore all common wealchs, of kingdomes, either of the Romanes, the Athenians, the Lacedemonians, the Thebanes, or others, whereof any histories are extant, and ye shall see a true image and lively resemblance of this verse.

Verse. 2. But to his beloued he will giue sleepe [or rest] or else:
To his beloued he will giue by sleepe.

After that he had befoze sufficiently reproued that presumption and desire to be like gods, which is naturally rooted in vs, now he proceeded to the other part of this psalme, in the whiche he teacheth that all thinges come from the blessing of God. For this is in deede the right order of teaching, first to destroy that which is false, and then to build vpp that which is true and sound. For it might be demanded: what is then to be done, if our power and wisdom doe nothing auail? As we see it came to passe in Cicero, in whome there was as great wisdom as was possible to be in a man, and yet he did no good therewith, but hurt both him selfe and others. He did not offend by ignorance as touching the affaires wherein he had to deale. What then was his offence? with his wisdom he loyned presumption, because that he thought the administration of the hardest matter in the whole worlde, to be the worke, the effect and fruite of his wisdom. Therefore, although there was in Cicero (as I haue said, and as his workes do testifie) so much wisdom as can be in any man, yet was he not able to performe that he tooke in hand. Therefore he could not see that ende of his labours, deuises and policyes which he looked for. Like as it happened also to Demosthenes and many other excellent men whiche with like presumption tooke vpon them the like government. Whereas then the same fell out contrary to their expectation, there was in them no fault of wisdom or wise and prudent government, but their owne folly was

was the cause thereof, in that they gloried, not only in them selves, but also in others, that the people might magnifie them and say: Behold, we haue followed this man, he hath brought these matters to passe, &c. as that verse of Cicero doth declare: O happie Rome (sayth he) when I was made a Consul thereof. Is not this an arrogancie intolerable and worchie to be beaten downe? In the ende therefore he singeth an other song, as in his epistle to Octavius it doth appeare. And this is to make of þ gift of God, a work of the pride of man, or rather of the deuill.

If then Cicero and Demosthenes, since their wisdom, their wise counsellis and deuises haue deceaued them, should now be demaund this question: what is to be done? Shall wisdom be reiected? Shall the common weale be neglected and forsaken? &c. Salomon aunswereth: No, not so. But (sayth he) ye must rule, ye must gouerne the common weale with counsell and good aduise. So he biddeth the master of a household to marry a wife, to till the ground, to nourish his family, &c. but yet so that this sentence must alwayes stand: he will giue to his beloued by sleepe. He will giue, that is, what so euer a man hath he must acknowledge the same to be a gift. Also he wil giue to him which is his beloued, and he wil giue also by sleepe. So that it shall be a gift, and a gift giuen to his beloued, and easily giuen. This is the summe & effect of this verse byiefly expoued, which he will afterwarde moze largely declare by the partes thereof: So that what so euer thou beholdest, thy selfe, thy life, thy body, thy wife, thy children, peace and quietnes, good successe, &c. thou must acknowledge the same to be the gift of the Creator, giuen vnto none but vnto his beloued. In the former verse therefore (as I haue sayd) is set forth a liuely resemblance of the whole world, wherein are men, not beloued, but Marke made through a carnall presumption and desire to be like vnto God; which will rule all thinges by their owne deuises and policies. These men haue no gift for as much as that which they haue, they doe not acknowledge as a gift, nor say: These thinges God hath giuen vnto me. And albeit Cicero and other Philosophers doe sometimes confesse that these thinges are Gods gifts, yet they doe not so beleue: for they them selves will bee as Gods, which with their owne counsellis, wisdom and wise policies haue defended the common weale, enlarged the Empire, prevented imminent dangers and troubles, &c. Through this presumption.

they prouoke God to send amongst them some Annibal, or some Pirrhus, or to stirre vp ciuill warres by Silla, Pompeius, or the conspiracie of Cataline, with other seditious persons, that so they might knowe them selues, not to be the gouerners of so high and weighty matters. Thus the wicked also and the goodes haue the giftes of God, although they vnderstand not that they are giftes. But this must we vnderstand and knowe. Therefore if thou hast married a wife, if thou be a Magistrate in the common weale, or liuest in any other calling, be wise, heare the word of God, and vnderstand what thou art, and what thou art not. Adoyme thy wife, thy children, thy family, thy substance with this title, that the Lord hath giuen them: that is to say, thinke euen from thine hart that they are the giftes of God, which God hath giuen thee, and requirerth nothing else againe for the same, but that with a thankful hart thou shouldest acknowledge the same to be his giftes. But this to doe is also the gift of God, as it is sayd in the .8. chapter of the booke of wisehome: I knowe that I coulde not keepe my selfe chaste except God gaue it vnto me, and that was a poynt of wisdom also, to know whose gift it was.

He therefore which certainly perswadeth him self, that his wife, his children, his goods are the giftes of God, is not proud through the successe thereof, because he knoweth them to be Gods giftes, and not his owne worke or his owne glozy. The husband being thus perswaded, hath a pure reioycing in his wife and children, because he knoweth that they are the giftes of God, and he enjoyerth them with thankes giuing, so long as it pleaseth God. If God take them away againe, he beareth it patiently and eateth not the bread of affliction, because he is the beloued of God, and he liueth as though he were in a sleepe, and whiles he sleepeth the nettle is drawne according to the prouerbe, that is, all thinges prosper and goe well with him. Thus the godly man vseth Gods giftes and that rule, that government which is committed vnto him by God. Genesis. 2. He eateth, he drinketh, he sleepeth, he reioycerth in his wife, his children, his substance with thankes giuing, saying: Lord God, it was thy gift, and it is thy gift: If thou take it away, thine it is againe, &c. So resteth his hart in true and godly quietnes. But the wicked haue the bread of affliction, and sleepe not, no not in the night. But the godly man, not onely in the nyght, but all the tyme of his life sleepeth sweetely: that is, he hath

a cheerefull and a quiet conscience, and resteth, as it were in a softe bedde. He leaueth vnto God the chiefe government of all things, he enioyeth Gods giftes, and knoweth him selfe to bee Gods instrument, and so hath all thinges in rest as it were by sleepe, geuing glory vnto God: and in doing nothing he doth all thinges, and in doing all thinges he doth nothing.

Thus hauing before sufficiently reprehended and condemned the presumption of mans wisdom and strength, he sheweth the true cause and also the chiefe master and gouerner of families and common weales: to witte, the Lord him selfe. And here he vseth a maruelous breuitie: he giueth to his beloued (sayth he) by sleepe. This sleepe whereof he speaketh must be referred to the rest and quietnes of the minde and conscience, and not to the rest of the fleshe or of the body. We must labour and trauel as touching the body, but with a cheerefull conscience, looking assuredly for the blessing of God: as in Genesis it is written, that all our welfare, and all that we haue consisteth in the blessing of God and not in our owne labour and industrie. Nowe he proceedeth, and that which before he briefly expounded, he declareth more at large in the same order which before he obserued, first speaking of houtholde government, and afterwarde of politike government.

Vers. 3. Behold, children are the inheritance of the Lord, and the fruite of the wombe his reward.

Not onely the wordes, but also the phrase and manner of speech are diuine and heauenly, which the holy Ghoste and the Scripture here vseth. The meaning then is this: Behold, this is the wisdom, this is the rule and the meane to iudge rightly of houtholde government and matrimony; that children are an heuently inheritance, that is to say, the gifte of God; and that the fruite of the wombe, that is, what so euer is borne of the wombe, is a reward, that is to say, the gifte of God. It is not besides the purpose, if, here for a difference perfect children in the first place as the malekinde, and in the second place the fruite of the wombe, as the femalekinde of all liuing creatures; but specially of mankinde. But all cometh to one thing, that is to say, to be a Father or to be a Mother is not the worke of man.

R. iiii.

but of God. And albeit the husband begetteth childre by his wife, & the wife conceaueth by man, yet both are the gifts of God, and both are the blessing of God, as the text saith: God created male and female. He created them (saith the Scripture) to signifie that they are not their owne gouerners and creators, but both male & female are the creatures of God. Afterwardes he addeth mozeauer: and he blessed them, saying, increase and multiply. Out of this place of Genesis is this verse of the Psalm taken. For in that God giueth vnto vs children, it is no worke of ours, but it is the blessing of God. Notwithstanding the worlde, although it hath continuall experience of this blessing, both neither vnderstande, nor consider the same. For the procreation of children, because it is a dayly benefite, and a continuall blessing, is nothing esteemed. Thus the worlde walloweth in voluptuousnes, filthy lust and pleasure, and these inestimable benefites wherein it liueth and walketh, it neither knoweth nor regardeth.

This is mozeouer to be noted, that God did not so confusedly blesse man as he blessed other creatures: but he adorne man with a peculiar blessing, to the ende we might vnderstand, that it is the gift of God to haue sonnes & daughters; and that neither the husband shoulde attribute to him selfe any thing as though he made his wife fruitefull, nor the wife shoulde attribute any thing to her selfe as though she conceaued through her owne strength and the benefite of nature: but should learne that these are in deede heavenly and diuine workes. Therefore some times we see that healthfull and betwixfull women coupled with strong and healthfull husbands, and liuing in great wealth and pleasure, are barren and fruiteles notwithstanding. Whereby God would shew, that to beget and to bring forth children is the blessing of God, & cometh not of the power of man or the strength of nature. Contrarywise an other man that liueth poorly, & hardly can get a good meales meate, hath a house full of children. It is a true saying therefore of the Germanes, when they speaking of their children doe say: God hath giuen me children. But although this saying be in euery mans mouth, yet are there very few that know what this blessing is, or esteeme it as they should doe, because it is ouerwhelmed and darkened with inordinate lust and other filthines of the flesh, with labours and trauells, with troubles, miseries and calamities. These thinges (I say) doe hide and darken this frequently benediction, so that

that it seemeth to be now not a benediction, but rather a malediction. For when parents dye and leaue their children without help and succour, when men see their children or their wiues stubborn, intractable and disobedient, &c. it seemeth to them that the malediction far passeth the benediction. Wherefore the Scripture calleth vs back to the consideration and beholding of the matter it self and the substance of matrimony, which is the blessing of God, that in beholding the same we may overcome what miseries and calamities so euer we finde in matrimony.

And here appeareth our infirmity and incredulitie. For this is the nature of vs all, that one discommoditie doth greene vs more, then an hundred commodities can make vs to reioyce. We see that he which hath an healthful body is more troubled with a puch or a hyle in his knee or in his elbow, then ioyfull for the health of his whole body besides: according to the Dutche prouerbe: If thou carpy a man to Rome vpon thy shoulders, and hurte him neuer so litle when thou settest him down, thou losest all thy thanks. Example hereof we see also in vnthankfull children, that when their parentes haue brought them vp with great charges, either they desire the death of their parentes, or else they are disobedient, and forget all the benefites bestowed vpon them. So it commeth to passe also in matrimony, that the benediction of God is darkened and ouerwhelmed with the malediction, as the woylde counteth it. The holy Ghost therefore doth here notably set forth and amplyfie this blessing, to the end we should rather behold the author and creator him selfe, then those troubles wherewith this holy kinde of life is hid and ouerwhelmed. Let vs therefore diligently set forth this woꝝd and in that let vs rest which we reade in Genesis: And he blessed them. With this woꝝde let vs arme and confirme our selues against those troubles and calamities, and say: If this our calling & kind of life be the blessing of God, I wil reioyce in the Lord the giuer of this blessing, how so euer the matter fall out, be it well or euill, and I will assuredly perswade my selfe that this woꝝke pleaseth God. For I know that my wife, my children, my house & family are the gifts of God, that thou maist write this title [it is the gift of God] vpon all that thou hast and doest possesse, and thus wrapping the blessing of God and diuine Paternie in thy kinde of life, thou shalt overcome all troubles and calamities be they neuer so great.

They that lack or neglect the worde and are without the feare of God, can not be thus perswaded of the state of matrimony, but they thinke that man and wife are coupled together by fortune, and that children are begotten and borne of them euen as of swine. When they haue them that bring them vpp in wealth and pleasure. Some time it cometh to passe also that the children of wise, excellent and notable men doe miserably degenerate, as many examples doe witnesse both in holy and prophane histories, and as commonly we see also at this day. Wherefore the holy Ghost calleth vs backe to the word of God, that we should learne that our bodies are not our owne, but that if thou be a man, thou shouldest thinke that what so euer is in thee pertaining to a man, is the gifte of God: and euen so that children are Gods blessing and his gifte, and not thynne owne. Wherefore continue thou the creature of God, and perswade thy selfe that thy life and thy body, in that thou art a man, doe please God. Then mayest thou without any great trouble and with a good conscience enioy those things which God hath giuen thee, namely thy life, thy wife, thy children and thy goods, and if any troubles come, thou mayest overcome them also by comparing the same with the other benefites, which thou shalt finde in thy kinde of life to be more & much greater, then all the troubles and calamities are besides.

Mozeouer by the name of children he signifieth not onely the fruite of the wombe, but also what so euer is necessarye for the bringing vp, the clothing, and the nourishing of the same. For he that giueth and createth children, giueth and createth also with them necessary sustenance to feede & to nourish them, or else they can not continue. To some therefore God giueth moze, to some lesse, yet so that he suffereth none to perish through famine, except it be to shewe his iudgement vpon some. Mozeouer, children doe bring with them generally euil in their birth by a diuine working of God, what so euer is needefull for their sustentation, that they should not perish through necessity. And although some times it hath so happened that mothers haue deuoured their children, yet a few examples do not take away this general rule. For these were speciall examples of the wrath and of the plague of God. It is one thing to speake of God as he is offended and sendeth plagues, and an other thing to speake of him as he gouerneth and nourisheth vs. Wherefore we see the children of such as liue miserably with
by ad

bread and water to haue healthfull bodie, liuely, and well liking. Againe we see many folkes childzen which liue in great wealth and pleasure, to goe like ghostes, leane, pale and pining. And why so? because childzen are the gift of God, whom God himselfe hath created: Therefore he giueth those things withall, which childzen can not lacke, as the first creation of man doth declare. For befoze that Adam was formed of the earth, God the maker of the earth prepared the same as a house for him to dwell in. And this house he left not empty and unfurnished, but replenished it with all kindes of wealth, riches, and all good things, that he might shew vnto vs the posteritie of Adam, that he would be our father, would keepe, guide, and gouerne vs, and giue vnto vs all thinges plentifully, so that we would beleue.

Likewise, whiles the child liueth yet in the mothers wombe, it is not able to helpe it selfe, but is nourished by God alone. For what is it able to doe, which lyeth yet without any sense? After it is come into the world, it hath the mothers breasts to nourish it, as a founteyne ordeyned to that ende and purpose: It hath bathes to wash it, it hath clothes to lappe it in, it hath the cradle to lye in, and such other thinges as it hath neede of. Moreover, there are not onely women at hande to doe what so euer is necessarie about the infant, but Angells also, as many notable examples doe witnesse: And to what ende are all these things done? To shewe that God will preserve his giftes and benefites. Therefore childzen are here to be taken, not for childzen onely, that is, for flesh, skynne and bones, but for all other thinges that pertaine vnto childzen. In like manner by the wife and the husband we must vnderstand, not their bodie onely, but their habitation, meate and drinke, apparell, and all other thinges necessary for the maintenaunce and government of a family. And these are the excellent giftes of God whether they bee great or small: For God doth not distribute them to all men alike: Notwithstanding although they bee but small, yet in that they are the giftes of God, they are great and liberall. For like as we rather esteeme and regard the rewards of princes by the bountifull heart and minde wherewith they are giuen, then by the balewe and worthines thereof, be they neuer so small: euen so although God hath giuen vnto thee but a small portion poorely to susteyne thee and thyne withall, yet lette the good will

The ministry of Angells about yong children & infants.

Philip. 4.

and the blessing of God content thee, and thereupon rest, because thou knowest assuredly that God loueth thee and of loue hath giuen the same vnto thee: which if he take from thee againe, thou shalt be moze able to beare it patiently, because thou knowest it to be, not thine owne, but the gift of God. Thus is thy mind quiet & at rest, whether thou haue plenty or whether thou lacke. When thou doest thus cloth and apparell, and (as a man would say) incorporate God with his owne benefites, then doe those benefites become moze large and plentiful, how smal so euer in outward appearance they seeme to be.

This may suffice as touching the meaning of the Prophet. Now it remaineth that we should say some thing concerning the grammaticall sense and signification of the wordes: which, because of the Hebrew phrase and maner of spech, is somewhat obscure. For where the Prophet sayth: Children are the inheritance of the Lord, we may say: Children are the gift of God. For in the Hebrew tongue this word inheritance hath a large signification. Inheritance the Hebrewes doe call the land diuided among the people by Iosua. Hereof it commeth that this word is applied to all donations and free giftes. For the land of Canaan was giuen onely to the children of Israell. Whereupon all possessions, proprieties, and free giftes are called inheritance. So is it sayde in the Psalm: Thy lawe is mine inheritance, that is, a gift which thou hast giuen vnto me. We vse this word otherwise, for that which is giuen to vs by our parents. But in the Hebrew tongue it is taken for a gift or a portion giuen of God.

Where he sayth: and the fruite of the wombe is his rewarde; we may say: Children are the bountifull, and the free gift of the Lord. It is a repetition of that which goeth before. As if he sayd: The benefite which we receiue of the Lord, as it were by inheritance, is children: the gift which the Lord bestoweth vpon the godly and proceedeth from his liberalitie, is the fruite of the wombe: So that inheritance and rewarde signifie both one thing, that is to say, the gift and liberalitie of the Lord. So we reade Ieremy 31. Refrayne thy voyce from weeping & thine eyes from teares: for thy workes shall be rewarded, sayth the Lorde. Also Matthe 5. Reioyce and be glad, for great is your rewarde in heauen. Likewise 1. Cor. 15. Be ye stedfast, for as much as ye knowe that your labour is not in vayne in the Lord, that is, it shall be re-

war.

warded.

This is the doctrine of the holy Ghost concerning the true and Christian government of households and families, to beleue that children and all things else are the gift of God. When we assuredly know that we receiue all things at Gods hands as the only giuer thereof, then do we learne by a goodly consequence, which the holy Ghost here teacheth vs, how we may beare & overcome all miseries and calamities: so that, if either wife or children dye, or if any other aduersities or miseries happen, we may say with holy Iob: The Lord gaue and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lorde. For reason being now lightened by the word, doth acknowledge Gods blessing, and giueth thanks vnto him for the same, and in aduersitie doth not repugne or repine against the will of God. Not that we can lose the gifts of God without sorrowe and heuynesse of the flesh: for we doe not here goe about to comfort the flesh, but the spirite. Albeit the very Saintes and children of God also doe feelee these troubles: notwithstanding they are not oppressed and overcome therewith. Like as Iacob was in great anguish when he had lost Ioseph: yet he did not despaire, he did not blaspheme, but suffered this calamitie patiently, because he knewe that, as Ioseph was the gift of God, so he was taken away againe also by God. He therefore that hath a minde thus prepared and instructed, shall not be overcome with any troubles or calamities, be they neuer so greuous. But it is not enough to learne these things by hearing and by reading of booke onely, but experience and practise thereof is also required, without the which this household government can neuer be learned, this blessing of true and christian matrimony cannot be vnderstand: As we may see in those which setting God aparte, be hold nothing else but fortune and chaunce. These men, when they enter into matrimony to no other ende but for this in lust, wealth and pleasure, and to aduance their children by their wisdom and policy, to great riches, honour and dignity, do find that all things fall out cleane contrary, so that both they, their wives, children and riches doe miserably perishe, because they are ignorant that there is no successe without the blessing of God. On the other side, they that injoy these gifts as the blessing of God, with thankful hearts for the same, although they fall into many troubles and afflictions, are not withstanding of a quiet and cheerefull conscience.

Note the end of those men that are not thankfull to God for their wealth and welfare, but attribute all to fortune and chaunce.

Verse. 4. As are the arrowes of strong men, so are the children of youth.

This is a similitude taken of warre, and pertained to polittike gouernment. The bow in y hand of the strong archer is not drawn in baine, as Dauid saith of Ionathan. The arrow or dart of Ionathan neuer turned back, that is, it neuer missed but perced & wounded. Wherefoze Esay calleth the Apostles arrowes: and likewise Zachary. The meaning then is this. It is the gift of God to reign at home in peace without sedition, and to obtaine victorie abroad. And without this gifte in ciuill gouernment there is no successe, nor victorie in battail. For in the common weale are alwayes more enemyes then friends. Howeouer the greater part is alwaies ent, & commonly ouercommeth the better, if God do not help. Wherefoze to haue a flourishing common weale, it is a speciall gifte of God. Pong men therefore must defend the common weale & stand in battail against the enemy. For they are like arrowes or darts, which strike and perfe because they are sent of God. For olde men are not meete for warre, according to that saying: Youth muste trauell, middle age must giue counsell and old men must pray. That is, pong men must labour and take paines for the defence & maintenance of the common weale. They that are more ripe in yeares and wisdoms, must helpe the common weale with graue counsell and good aduise, and they which are olde and impotent must pray for the prosperous state and good successe thereof.

But here note what an excellenc title he giueth to those that do defend the common weale, when he calleth pong men the gifte of God: such pong men he meaneth as are vertuous and feare God, whom God maketh mightie arrowes or darts to ouerthrow their enemyes and winne the victorie. For this euen the Gentiles also learned by experience, that victorie did not consist in the strength and power of man, but was giuen from aboue; and that industrie and wise polittie were of more force then armour & weapons. For hath it often times come to passe that great armies haue bene vanquished and put to flight with a small power. For that we shoulde not prouide armour and weapons, soldiers and men of warre for the defence of the common weale: but because the God giueth it, if he must needs make warre, shoulde neither in shame of him selfe, nor yet despair, whether he haue many soldiers or whether he haue

haue felue, but considering his charge and calling, whereby he is constrained to enter into battaile, should seeke and aske from heauen helpe and victorie, saying: Lord in thy hand is strength and victorie: be thou my helper, fight thou for me: Like as on the other side, if in the strength, power and multitude of men thou receibest thine enemies, yet mayest thou not therefore thinke thy selfe sure of the victorie, but thou must aske it of God, and say: Lord, victorie is thine, which if it be thy good pleasure to giue vnto me, I will thanke thee and praise thy name therefore. But if through our ouerthrow it be thy will to punish our sinnes, behold, here I am. Such a confidence, although it be but in the Magistrate, the guide or captaine alone, which acknowledgeth his charge & calling, and aske helpe and succour of God, shall undoubtedly obteyne the victorie: like as Iephtha did. He in his office and calling would gladly haue liued in peace together with his people: But this could not Ammon suffer. Wherefore Iephtha seeing that he was constrained to fight, prayed for the helpe & assistance of God against his enemies, and so obteyned the victorie. For he acknowledged that strength and victorie came not of him selfe, but of the Lord, as his onely gift. So King David had many and notable victories ouer his enemies, one after an other. By what meanes? Forsooth he had armour and weapons, with al furniture of warre, he had mighty armies both of horsemen and footemen. But victorie (sayth he) consisteth not in these thinges. Therefore he prayed that God would giue him victorie, and hoped to receaue the same no otherwise then at his handes alone. Upon this confidence and trust followed vndoubted victorie. Salomon therefore teacheth in this verse that victorie is the gift of God. And like as arrowes which are shot with might and violence, doe wound and pearce: euen so yong men are valiant in warre, not by their owne strength, boldnes and presumption, but by the blessing of the Lord alone. Children of youth. This is a phrase of the Hebrew. As much to say as yong men. As the child of death they call him which is appointed to death. Or it signifieth yong men begotten and borne of their parents in the tyme of their youth which are strong and able to stand in defence of the common weale.

Verse 5. Blessed is the mā that hath his quiver full of them; he shal not be ashamed when he speaketh with his enemies in the gate.

He setteth forth the former similitude more plainly, and by the quier he understandeth the common weale, as in the verse going before by arrows he understood yong men. As if he sayd: That is a happy Prince, and that is a happy common weale, which hath this blessing, and knoweth it to be the gift of God. Victory and peace must needs be there.

To speake in the gate is a phrase vsed of the Hebrewes. And it doth not onely signifie to speake, but to speake possitively, that is, to make lawes, to gouerne by lawes, to defend the goodly, to bridle the wicked, &c. And it is as much to say as where such yong men are, the Magistrates are able to speake in the gates: that is, they are able to defend the common weale, they fruitfully trauell in the affaires thereof, they mainteyne good lawes, &c. But heate what he addeth mozeouer, that such haue alwayes enemies which doe not onely withstand them, but also hate them and speake euill of them. But all this must they learne to beare. For if they will be discouraged through the malice of such wicked, if they seeke to please and feare to displease, there must needs follow a confusion of all things. As we may see in Princes Courts, where men seeke to please, and to liue in fauour, and therefore they will reprove nothing, least thereby they shoulde purchase the displeasure of the Prince. They will be in authoritie and liue in the Court for reward, promotion, and glory, and not to serue the Prince and the common weale. And hereof commeth it that there is no right forme of government any where to be found. Therefore let such as feare to offend and can not beare the displeasure and hatred of men, take no office, no rule or authoritie vpon them. Who euer governed a kingdome more holily then David? and yet when his seditions sonne Absolon spake euill of him to the people, he easily founde those which wold beleue him. And why so? Because David was a holy King, and did not wink at the sinnes of his subjects, but punished them sharply according to their desertes. This thing procured vnto David the hatred of the people. Afterwards when his owne sonne tooke vpon him to be the captaine and author of sedition, they were easily perswaded to forsake him their Loyde and King & rebelled against him. For it can not be but that he which wil doe his duety vprightly in his calling, not omitting nor neglecting the same either for feare or for fauour, must needs stirre vp against him the hatred of the wicked.

Therefore

Wherefore this clause, to speake with the enemies in the gate, must not be barely vnderstand, as of a matter of light importance. For it signifieth the great care and trauell, the faithfull diligence and vigilancie of godly Magistrates in their vocation, that is to say, to make good lawes and to execute the same, to contrayne the wicked to obey them with punishment, with bondes and imprisonment, to stirre vpp the fury of the malicious and spitefull, &c. So that he which ruleth must so rule, that he shall neuer be without the feare of great daungers if he respect the outrageous boldnes and presumption of the wicked. For he shall finde that to rule is nothing else but to heape vpon him selfe dispite and malice, and to cast him selfe into the iawes of a byting and a cruell beast: As Achines when he gaue ouer the gouernment of the common weale of Athens, sayd that he was deliuered from the common weale, as from a madde and a raging dogge. And Bias sayd, that the office sheweth what the man is. For howe many common weales; how many Princes shall ye see at this day, which keepe their people and their nobilitie in the reuerent and due obedience of their lawes? For, to rule, of all the workes and assayes that belong vnto man in this worlde, is the greatest and the hardest. Whereouer, like as he which entereth into matrimony and marieth a wife to no other ende but to accomplish his owne lust and pleasure, is deceiued, and wappeth him self in great and infinite troubles: euen so he that taketh vpon him any office in the common weale for reward, estimation and glozy, findeth all things cleane contrary to his expectation, if he endeavour to rule and gouerne as he should doe. Wherefore it followeth, that they being oppressed with troubles and tranells, become impatient and forsake all together.

Wherefore the Magistrate must learne that in gouernment these vices are not lacking: to witte, hatred, rebellion, sedition, discorde, ingratitude, and a thousand daungers: also troubles of the common peace and quietnes, which are enemies to his life, his goodes, his name and estimation. What shall the Magistrate here doe? First let him know that power and authoritie is the ordinance of God, perswading him selfe that he is appointed to rule and gouerne by the will of God. When he hath thus done, let him arme and confirme his mind agaynst all troubles and daungers, and let him boldly and cheerefully doe his

durp in his calling, though the people rage neuer so much. Then will God adoe his blessing vnto his labours: he will helpe and assist him against his enemies as here he sayth: He shall not be ashamed when he speaketh with his enemies, that is to say, disobedient, rebellious, & seditious persons. Againe, Psal. 144. which doth subdue my people vnder me. Also, Pl. 7. The Lorde is iudge over the people. As if he sayd: It lyeth not in my power, policie or wisdom, to rule this people. It is the Lord therefore that getteth obedient people, which notwithstanding, naturally hateth the Magistrate. For euery man loneth libertie, and will not be subiect to lawes. As at this day we may see in the nobilitie, which would liue in all libertie to doe what they list, without any punishment or regard of lawes. If the higher powers go about to brydle them by lawes, they fall away and become traitours and rebels.

Against such great enemies and daungers the holy Ghost comforteth the Magistrate in this place. When thou makest lawes for the common weale, sayth he, and faithfully executest the same, thou shalt not be ashamed: For God will giue thee pong men which shall be able to helpe thee. For often times we see that one or two good men by their wisdom, grauity and seueritie do keepe a whole multitude in good order. But contrariwise, they that wink at all thinges because they will not displease, are but paynted images and good for nothing.

Here haue ye a psalme as touching both ciuill and household government, instructing a godly man howe he shall behaue himselfe in both kindes of life, to the ende that he neither fall into securitie by too much successe, nor be discouraged by trouble & aduersitie. Both which things happen to the vngodly, which rashly and without the feare of God either enter into matrimony or take vpon them any office in the common weale. For since they are ignorant that God is the gouernour of these things, they will needes rule all together by their owne wisdom and policie. Whereof it followeth that they are miserably ouerthrowen in their own deuilles and practices, or else they fall into such securitie that they rule and reigne with all crueltie and tyranny: Wherefore, as this doctrine is most necessary and profitable, so we whom God either hath or hereafter will thrust into these kindes of life, must labour to acceptne, and to follow the same: wherein we shal be profitable both to the common weale and to our selues, Then shall our seruice, our labours

and

and trauels please God, & he, as he hath promised, will giue good successe thereunto, and will shew that he hath pleasure in them that feare him, and in all them that trust in his mercy.

The 128. Psalm.

Blessed is euery one, &c.

In the former Psalm the Prophet intreated of both kindes of life, that is, both of policie and householde gouernment. The same thing in a manner he doth also in this Psalm, but yet after an other sort. For albeit in this Psalm he toucheth household gouernment or matrimony with polycie and politike gouernment, and wisheth the blessing of God and peace vnto them both, yet hath he here a more respect to householde gouernment, because it is, as it were the fountaine and beginning of politike gouernment. For the children which we bring vp and instruct at home the posteritie will after wardes make gouerners of the common weale. For of houses are made cities, of cities shires, of shires a common weale or kingdome. Household gouernment therefore is called the fountaine of pollicie & politike gouernment. For where householdes and families are not maintained, there can be no Citie, no common weale, no kingdome. Wherefore to this Psalm we will giue this title, that it is an holy hymme, or a song in the praise of matrimony, whereby the Prophete comforteth such as liue in that holpe state, wishing vnto them and promising all felicitie and blessings of God. These things may afterwarde be also applyed vnto polycie gouernment. For as God blesteth matrimony because it is the ordinance of God and a kinde of life which highly pleaseth God, even so is the Magistrate also ordained of God and hath a certaine promise of the blessing of God.

And here appeareth the wisdom of the holy Ghost, which lieth from vs those thinges that in this kind of life are greuous or odious, and speaketh onely of those which are most meete to persuade and are good thinges in deede. The world doth the contrary. For it is not onely ignoraunt of the good thinges which are in matrimony, but also if it see any such, it esteemeth them as nothing; because of the troubles which presently it feelth. No maruel is it therefore, that when wicked men speake of this kind of life, they

The argument of the Psalm.

speake after an other sort & with other words, then the holy ghost is wont to speake. For they follow the sense and iudgement of the flesh onely, and see nothing else either in ciuill gouernment or in matrimony and houtholde affaires, but those things which seeme to be painfull, hard, and full of trouble: And not onely so doe, but those things also which in these kindes of life are diuine and heavenly in deede, they doe not perceiue, because of those small troubles and discommodities which touch the flesh. And hereof come these sayings: There is no citie without a burden, that is, without a woman. A wife is a necessary euill. To bury a wife, is better then to marry her. If we could be without women, we shoulde be without great troubles: And such other like sayings tending to the dispraise and reproch of women.

The cause why men doe thus peruerfely iudge, is this, that the flesh is so poysoned with originall sinne, that it can not be content to beare the punishmentes of sinne. It seeketh after such thinges as are sweete and pleasaunt: but troubles and trauellis it can not beare. Wherefore either it flieth altogether from matrimony and all ciuill affaires, as the Epicures and belly gods doe, or else abuseth the same to his owne lust and pleasure. So blind is it through originall sinne with the desire of pleasures, glorie and riches. Necessary it was therefore to apply some medicine vnto our corrupt nature, and somewhat to repressle and to hidle the wanton fleshe with those troubles which are both in matrimony and in ciuill affaires.

Wherefore, when we reade these praises of matrimony in the holy Scripture, and compare them with the iudgement of man, we shall see the one to be cleane contrary to the other. We must say therefore that these thinges are true according to the spirite, but according to the flesh they are not true: So where he sayth afterwards of the godly married man: Thou shalt be blessed & it shall be well with thee, the flesh thinketh the contrary, and iudgeth the married person to be most miserable and most unhappy, because he is contrayned to get his liuing with great labour and trauell. For the world knoweth not the thinges that pertaine to the holpe Ghost, and the good thinges and great blessings of God that are in matrimony, it seeth not, but reffecth onely in the creature, and seeth not God creating, gouerning and blessing the creature.

Contrariwise the holy Ghost loketh to the creator, & magnifieth the blessing

blessing of God, although it be overtaken with many so many
 afflictions and tentations. And for the troubles and discommodi-
 ties that are incident to these kinds of life, either he couereth them,
 or else he maketh them lesse then they be. And this the world can
 not doe. The wisest men therefore (as in histories we may see) dis-
 refuse to beare office in the common weale, or to deale in publike
 affaires. The same thing cometh to passe also in matrimony.
 For yong men will hardly suffer this yoke to be layd upon them,
 as the olde man sayeth of them in the Poet. They (sayth he) which
 are in loue (he meaneth vncast loue and fleshly lust) cannot abide
 to beare of marriage. They will not forsake their fleshly pleasures
 to liue chastly in holy matrimony. And if there be any which tho-
 rough vehement loue are brought vnder this yoke, when they see
 no such successe thereof as they looked for, but that some troubles
 or other doe follow, which they being blinded with loue could not
 foresee, then they complaine, then they repent & euer they brought
 them selues into such bondage: hereupon it followeth that the hus-
 band will rather beare with all wickednes in an harlot & a strum-
 get, then with any litle fault in his owne wife: as also the wife,
 except she be very goodly, will sooner wink at the wickednes of an
 adulterer, then at the small offences of her owne husband. For na-
 ture can not beare these pokes, if men be not well instructed by
 the word, and lightened by the holy Ghost, and so looke vnto the
 creator, who hath ordeyned both families and common weales, &
 will haue them to be gouerned and guided by this miserable and
 frailty flesh. They that haue not this knowledge, are soone prouo-
 ked to impatiencie when they see that all thinges haue not such
 successe as they would.

Therefore euen such as are godly minded, must be taught, ex-
 hortet and stirred vp, to behold some thing aboue & beyonde these
 troubles, reiecting the iudgement of the wise men of this world,
 and to looke to the true and inestimable good thinges which God
 hath hidde in these kindes of life. Then shall they more easily
 beare their troubles, and shew their obedience vnto God when he
 sendeth diuerse tentations. And to this ende we will enterprise
 this psalme, this marriage song, that we may behold those spiritu-
 all good thinges which God hath hidde in matrimony, & esteeme
 the same accordingly, to the end that we be not like to this world,
 which seeth the works of God, and yet doth not vnderstand them,

and heareth the blessing and sweet promises of God and doth not beleue them.

Verſe. 1. Blessed are all they which feare the Lord and walke in his wayes.

First of all here is to be noted, that the Prophet doth not by any by enter into the promises of God concerning matrimony, as though they were given onely in respect of matrimony: but he be- ginneth with the first cable, & calleth him blessed that feareth the Lord. And this he doth, to shew that the world doth not understo- what it is to marry a wife and to live in the state of Christian ma- trimony. Wherefore if any troubles come, it can not beare them patiently, and therefore it is not blessed, but rather miserable and unhappy. But he that feareth the Lord, whether he be called to a- ny gouernement in the common weale, or marry a wife, is blessed, what successe so euer follow thereof.

For it may be that euen they also which feare the Lord, shall haue no good successe in matrimony, but shall be coupled eyther with wicked, or with froward and disobedient wiuers, or else they shall be oetherwise shaken with one temptation or other, as with the untimely death of a good wife, or with vnractable and degenerate children, or with barennes & lacke of fruite. Here, if a man be god- ly and fearing God, he shall soone overcome these troubles & ten- tations. For thus will he thinke with him selfe: I haue mette with such a wife as is vnto me many wayes a great crosse and vexation: with whom no man else could quietly liue one day. But this gift God hath giuen me, that I should know and acknowledge him to be both my creator and father, and to learne patiently to endure & abide his good will and pleasure, &c. with this gift are overcome, not onely all the troubles and miseries of matrimony, but all cala- mities besides what so euer.

The Prophet therfore begetteth this holy hymne, or this ma- riage song after this maner: If thou wilt be happy and blessed, & haſt a mind to liue in the state of matrimony, this shalt thou finde, that the Lord will giue vnto thee a wife, house, and children, with other commodities. But aboue all things see that thou feare God, and in the name of God begin this kind of life. This is a profit- able doctrine, which here y^e holy Ghost setteth forth euen at the be- ginning,

ginning, to the ende that he which can not liue a single life, should begin his matrimony with the first commandement, and calling vpon God for his help & succour, should come forth into the presence of God, and say: Lord, thou hast created me in thy wofe, that thou art and wilt be my Lord and my God. Thou hast made me a man, or thou hast made me a woman. This is thine owne creation, and this is thine owne wofe. I did not so make my selfe, neither was I so made by fortune or chance. Our good successe therefore vnto thy creature, & graunt that I may be a happy husbande, or that I may be a happy wife, &c. that so we may beginne in the feare of God, that we be not secure & careless, or presuming of our owne strength, nor rashly enter into this kind of life, like sauage & brutish people, and such as neither know nor feare God: but may call vpon him who hath created vs to this kind of life. Then shall all thinges come luckely to passe; then shall they haue good successe.

The holy Ghost beginneth his hols hymne after an other manner then other Poetes doe. For he exhorteth vs that we should first of all call vpon God, and conserue in our hearts a sure trust of his mercy. For God will not turne his earre from thee if thou call him thy creator, that will againe acknowledge thee to be his creature, and will not deny this to be his worke, that thou art a man, or that thou art a woman. But presumption he abhorreth, and will not haue thee to beginne this kinde of life trusting in thine owne policie, but rather that thou shouldst suspect the same, knowing that God will not prosper thy doings and policie, except thou aske counsell of him. Therefore saith hee, Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord. For we haue dayly examples before our eyes, that at the beginning there is often times beehement and seruient loue betweene man and wife, whiche afterwards is easily quenched, so that either they liue miserably and inquietly together, or else the one forsaketh the other. Some times they are so drowned in wealch and pleasure, that they liue all together without the feare of God: And this is a farre greater misery. But worthely doe these miseries and calamities fall vpon them. For why doe they not soyne withall the feare of God?

Here thou must learne therefore to liue in the feare of God, who hath created thee that thou shouldst be a husbande, or that

thou shouldest be a wife, and he will also governe, blesse and prosper thy marriage. But if thou wilt not acknowledge him to be thy governor, but wilt rule thy wife and thy family after thine owne fantasie, without invocation and prayer vnto God, it will followe that either thou shalt ouerthrow all together, or shalt be so blinded with continuall successe, that thou shalt fall yet into farre greater evils. God will be feared and serued: that is, he will haue vs to confesse and acknowledge that what so euer we take in hande, can not prosper or haue any good successe without his helpe and assistance.

It is very profitable and necessary, with all diligence to teach this doctrine to those which are yet young, that they may know it and follow it. The cause is this, for that matrimony remaineth in the world and in the flesh, that is to say, euen in the midst of Devils. The husband, as touching the flesh, soone lotheth or hateth the wife or the wife her husband. What is the cause hereof? Euen this is the cause, for that matrimony consisteth in the flesh, which is wholly corrupted and polluted with sinne. This (the flesh I meane) Satan inflameth with hatred and euery light offence, or else with lechouse. Wherefore if thou looke not vnto the wil of God, thy matrimony can neuer be vnto thee either stable or comfortable.

Wherefore yowth must be well instructed as touching matrimony, that when any man shall marry a wife, he may liue with her in the fauour and blessing of God, and say: Lord, this is thy gift, that I am a man. This wife also is thy gift. We are in the worlde and this fragile flesh, and in the midst of devils the disturbers of matrimoniall loue. Giue vnto vs therefore thy blessing, that albe it some offences doe rise betwene vs, yet thy blessing and the reuerent consideration of thy gift, wherewith thou hast endued vs in this our matrimony, may vanquish and overcome the same, &c. This is the cause why he beginneth this verse with the feare of God, that he may take from vs all presumption, lest we shoulde thinke that we shall haue and enjoy all things as we our selues haue imagined. For so shal it not be so if it so come to passe, it shal not be without a greater mischief, euen the reiecting of the word and knowledge of God. The meanes to escape this, is to feare God and to trust in him, and so in the name of God with humble prayer to begin matrimony, committing the successe wholly vnto God.

In

In the papacie they most wickedly defaced this holy institution, for they called it the secular state, and martyen folkes were taught to recite in their private confession among other sinnes, the company betwene man and wife. Amongst the blind popish Sophisters and schoolemen there was a disputation as touching veniall and mortall sinne in carnall copulation (as contemptuously this carnall spiritualtie calleth it betwene man and wife. But these were both vaine and wicked disputations. And hereof Augustine seemeth to haue given an occasion when he saith, speaking of veniall sinne, that it is like to the sinne of married folkes, for the which (saith he) men doe pray: Forgive vs our trespases. True it is in deede that this companing of man and wife together ought to be moderate, to suppress the seruencie of fleshly desire: And like as a measure ought to be kept in meats and drinks, so godly married folkes ought not to peelee too much vnto the flesh. For this burning desire and soule lust wherewith the flesh is enflamed, cometh of sinne. Therefore for the punishment of this lust, is annexed withall the bitter woymewood of many cares and troubles which men haue for liuing, for children, for the gouerning of private and publicke affaires, besides the offences of their families, their neighbours, &c. All these things are cast vpon the flesh as salt to season the wantonnes of the same: For whose infirmity God by matrimony would prouide, but not encrease the desire and lust thereof.

This doctrine then must first be taught (for else can not matrimony be happy, comfortable and pleasing God) that such as enter into the state of matrimony should feare God, that is to say, they should cast away the presumption of their owne deuises and policies, and giue them selues to humble prayer, desiring of God a good, a chaste, and obedient wife, and also good successe in other things, and that if any thing happen contrary to their expectation, they may take it in good part that their hope is deceaved and their policie disapoynted.

And here the prophet doth not onely require that whiche is commaunded in the first precept, to witte, that they should giue vnto God his due worship, that is, they should feare God and trust in his goodnes and mercy, (for this is the seruice which we owe vnto God) but he addeth mozeouer: Blessed is the man that walketh in his wayes, that is to say, which doth the woꝝkes also of the

first table, which yeeldeth obedience vnto his parentes and to the Magistrate, which committeth no murder, which doth nothing that may be hurtfull vnto others, which desireth not him selfe with barlots and whoopedome, but marieth a wife to this ende that he may liue chastly and auoyd such wickednes. The Papistes were wont to sing and yet doe sing this psalme, but they vnderstande it not. For they follow Hierome, which vnlearnedly and very vngodly thus reasoneth against matrimony. If married folkes be blessed (saith he) it followeth that Isaac before he was forty yeres olde, & likewise other holy men whiche had no wiues, were not blessed with this manner of blessednes. But we know that this psalme speaketh not of those which are priuileged, as Jeremy had a commandement that he should not marry. Iohn Baptist for a singular purpose abstained from mariage: as our Saviour Christ also did. Let them which haue this gift saile on with their owne winde and keepe the course appoynted vnto them of God. But let vs which haue not this gifte, & are without this priuilege of these excellent men, learne this lesse: that is, in the feare of the Lord let them marry and so walke in the wayes of the Lord. And let them know that they may so liue in this kind of life, that both they may feare the Lord and walke in his wayes, contrary to the vaine persuasion and deuillish doctrine of the Pope and the whole Papacie, which dreame that matrimony is such a kinde of life as is euer cleane contrary to religion, or not agreeable to the same.

A priuilege
as touching
continencie
and to whom
it is giuen.

Chast matrimony
can
not stand with
the vnchast
and filthy
religion of the
Papistes.

Verse. 2. Thou shalt eate the labour of thy hands, thou shalt be blessed, and it shall be well with thee.

This must they learne also which are married, that they must labour. For the law of nature requirerh, that the husband should sustaine and nourish his wife and his children. For after that man and wife doe know that they ought to feare God their creator, who not onely made them, but gaue his blessing also vnto his creature, this secondly must they know, that some thing they muste doe that they consume not their daies in ease and idleness. Hesiodus the poet giueth this counsel, that first thou shouldest get thee a house, then a wife, and also an oxe to till thy ground. First he would haue thee to prouide an habitation where thou mayest dwell with thy wife and children: then a wife, but yet so that thou be not with-
out.

out an ore also to plowe the ground: that is, thou must haue some thing wherewith thou mayest maynteyne and succour thee and thyne. For albeit that our diligence, care and trauell is not able to mainteyne our family, yet God bleth the same as a meane by the which he will blesse vs. So neither to the husband man the sowing of his seede, nor to the preacher his trauell in preaching the word is sufficient to mainteyne his liuing: yet God by these or rather with these, giueth vnto them wherewith they may liue.

Wherefore the Prophet would haue all married folkes to liue in the sweate of their faces, and to be exercised with labour, that they may tame the flesh and mortifie the lustes thereof. For they that liue in idleness, walke in the wayes, not of the Lord, but of the deuill. For neither are they, neyther liue they in the ordinance of God: for God hath ordeyned labour. And here behold the wisdom of the holy Ghost. Labour is one of the discommodities of matrimony. But howe wel here doth the holy Ghost hinde this discommoditie, when first he sheweth that labour is commaunded of God, and afterwarde promisseth that although it seeme to be neuer so hard and so greuous a thing, yet by it God will blesse vs. This is in deede to mingle woymeewood with suger: like as also Iesus Sirach adozneth labour with this commendation, that he sayth, it was ordeyned of God, and he hath also a pleasure therein. Great neede haue we of this admonition because of our corrupt nature. For most true it is that the nature of all men, as the Poet sayth, is prone and ready to fall from labour to slepy lust and fleshy libertie.

This holy hymne therfore teacheth the husband to his spouse, that in their matrimony they should feare God and put their trust in him, and not in their riches, their wisdom and policie. For to auer he forwarneth them what discommoditie they should finde in matrimony, namely that they must worke and liue with the labour of their owne handes. Nowe, where there is a lust remayning in the flesh which soyneeth man and wife together, yet is not this the principall knot. For such occasions and such troubles may follow whereby this knotte may soone be loosed. But these are the true knots of matrimony, to know that euen this labour of thy handes and care for thy family are an acceptable sacrifice vnto God: that the wife, when she giueth the breast vnto her infant: the husband when he laboureth vntill he sweate, and tyreth his body

with labour to succour him and his, with such service vnto God, as farre passeth all the service, and all the worshipings of the Pope and his religious rout. For marke I pray you what the Prophet sayth: Thou shalt be blessed and it shall be well with thee.

This consolation therefore is very necessary against this offence, and this peruerse iudgement of the world, to the ende that they which are married may know, that God hath ordeyned this kind of life, and that in it they should labour and sweate, and beare the malediction of originall sinne, which malediction began in paradise, and is layed vppon vs all: and moreover, that they should know, that the holy Ghost pronounceth them blessed which are diligent in their calling, and labour cheerefully. These things are suche, as are able to encourage the godly to beare willingly all troubles and miseries what so euer. For what canst thou desire more? First thou hearest that God will so blesse thy labours that thereby he will giue thee a liuing and all things necessary for this life. Moreover, thou hearest that he hath a pleasure in thy labour, and appoyneeth the same, yea and accounteth it for a most acceptable sacrifice. For it is not labour alone, but a worke of obedience and of thy vocation. These thinges the wicked know not, & therefore either they seeke ease and rest, or else if they must needs labour, they are very impatient: For they doe not see with the eyes of the spirit, but iudge all together according to the eyes of the flesh: which eyes can see nothing but troubles and miseries. But the spirit repleth vp and comforteth the godly with this comfort, that God will both blesse them by the meanes of their labour (for if he giue any thing to those which are idle and slothfull, he giueth it but to their destruction) and that this sweate & this trauell please God highly. Here are two great commodities for one discommodity, which the flesh seeth onely, and no more.

But here we must note that this is not called labour only when the body is exercised and weeried, but the care and trouble of the mind is also a labour. For the Prophet bleseth here such a word as signifieth not onely that labour which is done with the hands, but also the discommodities, the sorowes and vexations which in our labour and with our labour we doe susteyne. Such troubles in families and households doe chaunce very often. Many times it commeth to passe that when the husband doth his duetie carefully and diligently, his wife is vnquiet and full of strife, his children full

sicke,

sicke, his seruants are not onely negligent, but also deceitful and vnfaithful. These thinges we call not labours; but sorowes and vexations: and yet notwithstanding the Prophet comprehendeth both vnder the name of labour. So that whether we seeme to bee afflicted either in doing or in suffering, that is, either in bodily labour or vexation of the mind, all this shoulde we patiently endure, & think that God hath not giuen vs this life that we shoulde spende it in ease, in idleness and vaine pleasures. For this cause he sayth to the woman: I will multiply thy sorowes whiles thou art with child, and in sorow shalt thou bring forth children. For great are the sorowes and the troubles of a woman euen before her trauell also. And in her trauell how neare death is she? Likewise he saith vnto the man: Cursed is the earth for thy sake. In sorowe shalt thou eate of it all the dayes of thy life. Here thou seest that this labour and this sorowe is appoynted to endure, not for a day, or a yere, but for all the time of thy life. Here will some man say: If it be so, it is better to be vnmarried & to liue in wholedom. Proue, and see whether thou canst bring thy selfe out of these troubles. Nay, in so doing thou shalt moze miserably entangle thy selfe therein, and heape moze horrible calamities vpon thine owne heade. For by this meanes thou shalt procure vnto thy selfe the wrath of God and an euill conscience, and thine owne hart shall condemne both thee and thy deuillish life. For whilest thou followest the pleasures of the flesh, thou shalt fall into the bitterness of the spirit, and what that is, thou shalt feelee when the time commeth. For one droppe, as you would say, of an euill conscience swalloweth vp a whole sea of worldly ioyes and pleasures. How wilt thou then do when through thy wicked life thou shalt be compelled to suffer the torment and vexation of conscience not for one day, but for many yeares? On the other side, where as a merry and a quiet conscience is, being wel perswaded of the fauour and blessing of God, there is also euerlasting ioy, which doth so swallowe vpper those droppes of worldly sorowes and troubles, as the heate of the Sunne consumeth morning dewe.

Is it not then a greates madnes so to feare and to shunne those small droppes & litle sparkes of labour, when thou seest that God hath seasoned and sweetned them with moste swete and pleasaunt sugar, in that he saith here to all those that labour and suffer the discommodities and troubles of manerly: Thou art blessed be

it shall be wel with thee: That is, where as thou art placed in this kind of life, whereas thou labourst and art many wayes troubled, tempted and afflicted, and sufferest nowe this trouble nowe that, this doth not onely please me, but to thee also it is very profitable, that by this meanes the flesh may be mortified and original sinne suppressed, and thou in matrimony (as in a schole) maist learne this heauenly wisdome, namely, to abyde and endure the will of God patiently, and mayest haue thereby a thousand occasions to declare the patience and loue, which out of matrimony and in the single life thou could neuer haue. They that so liue in matrimony, when they are moste miserable, are, euen then most happy and blessed. Contrariwise they that doe not so liue, are moste miserable. For they suffer the labours & troubles which this life cannot be without in such sort that they ioyne sorowe to sorowe & one calamitie to an other. Whereof riseth strife and variance betweene the husband and the wife. Whereof is cometh that the one so abhorreth the other, that they will not goe, talke, eate or drinke together. This is a deuillish life. Wherefore this exhortation must be diligently learned and exercised, that through patience we may endure and overcome all labours, sorowes, and vexations, being contented with this benefite, that we knowe this kinde of life to be acceptable vnto the Lord, and that in it and by it he will blesse vs. Thus with a merry and a cherefull conscience we shall overcome all troubles and tentations whatsoeuer.

Verse 3. Thy wife shall be as the fruitefull vine on the sides of thy house, & thy children like the olive plantes round about thy table.

We haue hearde two singular commendations of holy matrimony where the husband & the wife doe liue together in the feare of the Lord & walke in his wayes, namely that this life is acceptable vnto God and that he will blesse the same. Therefore we are here exhorted and encouraged patiently to endure the cares and troubles which God hath allotted to this kind of life, to the ende that whyles we are beaten downe, humbled and kepte vnder by these troubles, the corruption of the flesh may be mortified and the infirmities of nature may be healed. For where as the idle belied Sponks taught men to sequestre them selues from all labours and

and trauels, and from all worldly busines, and to seeke a solitary life where they might liue in all ease and quietnes: the Prophet here teacheth that this pleaseth not God. But this is it that pleaseth God, that we should be tolled with troubles and shaken with tentations, knowing that God hath appointed vs here to suffer labours, sorowes and vexations both * active and passive, which

* Active or passive, that is, which either come vnto vs by labour & trauele, or which we suffer inwardly or outwardly by any means.

Whereouer, I somewhat touched before, that Hierome and some other also after him, did dispute as touching this Psalm, why David commendeth the life of a godly man to be so happy if he haue a wife, since that in the holy Scripture there are so many holy men which liued a single life, as peraduenture Elias and Helizus did, with other like: albeit of these men he can not thus certainly affirme, but Jeremy he may. To this I aunswere, that the Prophet here meaneth nothing els but to instruct the godly as touching this kind of life instituted of God, and goeth not about to compell all men to marry, but teacheth those which are married, or intend to marry, to know and vnderstand what they haue when they haue wives: so that both the single life and also matrimony may haue their libertie.

The meaning therefore of the Prophet here is nothing els, but to commend and set forth the gift of God, and not to compell any man to marry. For one and the same spirite hath distributed his gifts, to some after one manner, and to some after another. We are all in one body, and we are all bewitched with one and the same spirite, but not after one manner. Let them therefore to whom it is giuen to * receaue this, abyde still in their single life, and let them glory in the Lorde. On the other side let those that are not so strong, but knowe and feele their infirmities, that they can not liue both chaste and out of matrimony: let these (I say) consider more their owne infirmities, then the vnicommodities and troubles that belong vnto matrimony: and let them knowe that they haue an excellent remedy created of God for their infirmities, and therefore the Scripture calleth the woman a helpe vnto the man. Wherefore, although we be vnable in gifts, yet let every one of vs seerke God in our gift and calling, and let our selues in all godlines to be the true and happy families.

Math. 9.
* That is, to liue chaste without matrimony.

that great and haecunly household. This is then (as I sayde) the purpose of the holy Ghost, to extoll and magnifie this gift of matrimony (since it is so despised in the world, and the true prayles thereof are so hid and darkned, partly by the corruption of the flesh, which can seele nothing but present troubles, and partly by the suggestions of the Deuill and sleanders of the world): and yet so notwithstanding that other gistes lose not their commendation. Let widowes, let virgins abide in their calling. The holy Ghost here speaketh nothing of our virgins, but of matrimony onely, to the ende that they which liue in that state, should knowe and acknowledge their gift.

Now whereas Hierome, both vngodly and without all iudgement objecteth, that Abraham, Isaac, and other Patriarkes married wiues when they were of great yeares, and liued many yerres also in matrimony without children, and therefore were not blessed according to this psalme, I deny the consequence. For Abraham, Isaac, & others were blessed euen before they married wiues, or had any children: Like as also widowes and virgines which do beleue & are baptised, are blessed. And as touching the psalme, it speaketh of the gift onely, & compelleth none therunto, but adjoyneth a benedictione is with this singular commendation, because it is so miserably defaced and contemned in the world. The Pope and his Clergie doe pretend that they eschewe marriage for the loue of chastity. But that is false. We must beleue S. Paule rather, who saith that they should contemne matrimony, being ledde with the spirit of error, and not with the loue of chastite, especially seeing they haue made a lawe whereby they forbid matrimony. Therefore they speake a lye through hypocrisie when they say that the loue of chastite is the cause why they abhorre matrimony. For neither are they chaste, neither can they be chaste, as their abominable life and wicked practises do declare. But this doe they that they may liue in ease and securitie, and be free from all the cares and troubles of matrimony: And againe, that through hypocrisie they may winne vnto them selues an opinion of great holines amongst the people, and be reuerenced in the worlde as spectacles and very Angells rather then men, and so be counted worthy to ease the labour of other mens hands. This is the hope that is to say, the miserable chastite of our Papists, Purses, & Priests, & Monks and Nunnes.

They

2. Timoth. 4.

They that after this maner absteyne from matrimony, are very Antichristes, according to the saying of Daniel, who foresaweth that this is a most euident marke of Antichrist, that he shall not care for the desire of women. The same place doth the ordinary glose also apply vnto Antichrist with these wordes, that he shall make a great shewe of chastitie, to the ende he may the more easily deceaue. We also adde this cause moreouer, that they make this glorious pretence of chastity and holynes, because they would liue in ease and idleness, & eschewe the cares and troubles that matrimony bringeth with it: which are meete & necessary for a godly man, if it please God to lay them vpon him.

Thus ye see that matrimony is a good, an holy and a profitable kind of life, & is worthy of the commendation which this psalme here giueth vnto it, although the flesh and the world can not praise it because of the incommodities and troubles which it bringeth with it, but highly extollet the single life. This is not to follow the word of God, but the iudgement of the flesh, which commendeth giftes and maketh a difference of them according to his own fantasie; and thinketh to serue God more truely and purely in the single life, then in matrimony: as Hierome doth in his prestilene booke which he writeth against Iovinian: who sheweth him selfe to haue more learning and iudgement in his litle finger then Hierome hath in all his body. For he ought not to haue praysed virginitie with the reproch and dyspraise of matrimony: but thus should he rather haue sayd: that as they which are virgins should serue God in their gift and calling, so matrimony is not to be condemned, but praysed as a kind of life ordeyned of God, euen then, when nature was yet sounde and vncorrupt, and not yet infected with any sinne. But Hierome hath neyther so much goodlines nor iudgement but peruersly burseth out into these wordes: It is good for a man so to be: therefore to haue a wife it is euill. But to be a virgine, and to be married, although they bee diuerse giftes, yet is God as well pleased with the one as with the other. For where as they obiect these wordes as touching matrimony: Such shall haue trouble in the flesh, this do we also confesse. Notwithstanding matrimony is not the cause hereof, but sinne, which they also haue that are not married. Gen. 3.

Thus much I thought good to say as touching the grosse error & prophane opinion of Hierome, trifling, and by foolish allegories

with his companion Origen, imagining spirituall fathers and spirituall children: whereby they haue giuen occasion vnto the Pope to make him selfe the hydegrome of the husband of the church, and so one error hath brought forth another. But I would rather wish that this hydegrome were hanged vppon a tree with Iudas and buried in hell, then that by this meanes he should spoile Christ of his name. For Christ Iesus alone is the husband of the Church. All the Sainctes of God besides, are but the frendes of the hydegrome, as Iohn the Baptist calleth him selfe. The Church is the spouse of the wife, the children are the faithfull which dayly come vnto the marriage. These also are made the spouse, for they become partakers of the good things and the blessings of the hydegrome, and they obteyne the righteousness of Christ and of his merites. If the Pope be good, then is he in the number of these, and not the hydegrome, not the husband, but the spouse, and is partaker of the benefites and the blessings of the hydegrome: But if he be euill, he is the hydegrome of Satan and the friend of Iudas.

Math. 9. 11.

This is then the summe and effect of our aunswere, that this Psalmie compelleth none to marry, as though it were necessarie that al should liue in matrimony: For it is not against these wordes of Christ: he that is able to receiue this, let him receiue it. But this is his onely vnt and purpose to set forth and commend matrimony, contrary to the corrupt iudgement of the flesh, and the pestilent examples of the world, which doe altogether fight against this kind of life, because of the troubles and incommodities which are incident thereunto. These troubles they that sit & will not feelee, & therefore abhorre matrimony, defile them selues with whoredom and al uncleannes, and so do much hurt by their deuillish and damnable example. Against these viperous tongues & examples full of offence, this Psalmie armeth vs. The world calleth the wife a necessary euill. But Peter vpon certeyne consideration, and yet without reproch, calleth her a weake vessel. But marke what the holy Ghost sayth in this place: marke how he bewittnes and commendeth the wife, whiles he compareth her to a fruitefull vine, and the children which she bringeth forth to oliue plants. Tell me if in any monuments there are to be found such two excellent similitudes as these are? yea if there be the like to be seene in all the Scriptures? For he taketh two of the most excellent trees that

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are to be found vpon the earth, the vine and the olive, of the which are gathered two notable and precious licours, & to these be compared the wife and the childe in her fruite, before the world most contemptible things. The wife, if you consider her condition, is farre inferior vnto the man in those things which pertaine either to the body, or to the minde, specially as touching y^e affaires which are done by the man and can not be done by the woman. But the holy Ghost considereth the gifts, and through the greatnes and excellency of the gifts he couereth what incommoditie so euer is in the womankind, and shadoweth the same with most excellent and goodly similitudes.

Now, that we may see somewhat the causes why the holy Ghost so greatly commendeth the woman kinde, let vs imagine that we are all unmarried: for the world detesteth marriage, but specially they that are unmarried: Yea let vs presuppose that in the world there is neither man nor woman; but such a one as is neither of them both, that by this meanes singlenes of life may be imagined to be the moze perfect. What shall become I pray you, of such a happy world, pure chastitie and singlenes of life? how shall mankind continue? Shall not the whole world within twenty yeares be like vnto a desert and a wilde wilderness? what vse shall there be then of Golde and siluer? Yea what vse shall there be of the Summe, the Moone and all things else that growe vpon the earth, if mankind suddenly decaying, matrimony by this meanes should be abolished and singlenes of life onely aduanced? Yea, where shall the ministry of the word become? What fruite shall there be of the benefite of Christ? Why doost thou then so praise the single life, that thereby thou shouldest diminish the dignitie and excellent fruite of matrimony? Nay, praise them both according to their worthynes, and especially mark here how the holy Ghost teacheth thee to beholde and to consider of thy wife: that is to say, not as weake flesh, which doth the common offices and duties of nature (with reuerence and shamefastnes be it spoken, for so I am compelled to speake because of the blasphemous contemners of the creature of God). For why doost thou not likewise euen in the vine also? Why doest thou not contemne it for the dunge that is layed to the roote thereof? Nay rather, hast thou not a moze regard of the licour which by this meanes is gotten out of the vine? Likewise in the Olive the roughnes of the rinde offendeth no

man, or that the roots thereof must be dressed, and as it were, fattened with bountie. For we haue all a principall regaroe vnto the fruite. What madnes then is this, that men in smaller matters can chuse the best thinges, and for a greater comoditie winke at those which are euill, and will not doe the same in the woman which is the good creature of God? As though the woman also did not see some lothsome thinges (for so these nice and delicate hypocrites doe tearme them) to be reprehended likewise in their husbandes.

In a childe we can discerne betwene the childe and his ordure, his scabbes, his diseases, or any like thinge. For who relecteth his childe because he hath defiled him selfe? yea who forsaketh him because he is scabbied and scurvy, or infected with the pestilence or any other contagious disease? Is not his ordure and vncleannes washed away? Is not he carefully tended and tended in his sickness that he may recouer his health againe? Thus we shadow and couer the faults and deformities of nature, with the greatnes and excellencie of that good thinge whiche we knowe to consist in the health and welfare of our children. Here who would not detest him which should say that the childe should be cast away because he defileth him selfe, or because of his disease, be it neuer so greate? As these holy hypocrites doe moste spitefully reprehend those duties of matrimonye which the man sheweth towards his wife. What? shall we not thinke her to be the creature of God, and partaker of the benefite of Christ? Besides this, that she is giuen vnto vs to this ende, that she may be an help vnto vs. Wherefore they are diuillish wordes which the wicked doe vse against the lawfull company and duties that are betweene man and wife, because they will seeme to be holy and great louers of chastitie, and would they to condemne these thinges. If such men were worthy to be fathers, they should vnderstand how little it would offend a good or naturall father euen to kisse his scabbied and sick childe, to handle and to heale his sores. For if infanties should be caste away eyther because of their diseases or scabbenes, I praye you Spye, where should you and I nowe haue beene? Wherefore the word is sharply to be rebuked which euen in the best thinges considereth the faults, but esteemeth not the vertues. And where as it cannot lacke the vse of these vertues, and hath them daily euen, as it were, in his handes; yet is it so blinde that it can
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not see them. But this cometh of originall sinne, to be starke blind euen in the most excellent creatures of God, and not to understand what good things and great blessings are offered vnto vs in and by them, but rather to be offended with such small faultes or incommodities which in comparison thereof are in a maner nothing to be regarded.

Wherefore we must here doe as Cicero sayth he was wont to doe in pleading of causes: to wit, that if there were any euil therein, that he passed ouer with silence: but if there were any good thing, that he urged, that he amplified, therein he was wholly occupied. For who will haue the lesse regard of his owne body because he hath a soze in his breast, or in his longs, or some other malady in any other part of his body? Yea haue we not therefore a greater care & regard of our bodies? Looke vpon our Courtiers, who when they haue well pampered them selues and carry their bellies full of oyle and dunge, walke in their silkes and other sumptuous apparel, decked with gold and other goodly ornaments, and smelling as though their bodye were nothing else but a precious balme, and yet doe they not once thinke how full of filthines they are. Thus we hide our faultes and deformities most diligently, & that which is honest or appeareth so to be, we set forth and magnifie to the vttermost. But now, why doe we not the like in matrimony? why doe we not couer the faultes and commend the vertues thereof? Nay, we doe cleane contrary: So blinded we are with originall sinne that in the best and most holy things we pick out that onely which we may reprehend. In like maner we doe also in the word of God, and in all things that pertaine to the kingdom of God. For whereas he giueth vnto vs the vse of the sunne, plenty of vitrells, a whole body, &c. these blessings no man considereth, no man giueth thanks for them. But if God begin to visit vs with the pestilence, if we be pinched a litle with deareth & scantie of vitrells, or but one of our teeth doe ache, by and by we are so vexed that the anguish thereof either hideth or bitterly taketh away from vs the remembrance of all Gods benefices. Thus goeth it with the world and with our owne reason, that we are moze mowed with one euill (as we esteeme it) then with a thousand good things besides.

But the holy Ghost taketh a contrary way. For he couereth the faultes, and that which is good he setteth forth with worthy pray-

les. Wherefore he so paynteth out the wife, that he commendeth thee to consider of her as of a vine planted in thy house and given to thee of God, whose fruites are diuine plantes, much more pleasant and more excellent then the oliue tree. For albeit they degenerate and grow out of kind, and become euill plantes, yet can it not be denyed but that they are the gift of God: and that must we acknowledge. Nowe let them (as I haue sayd) which haue the gift of chastite, be without this vine, and let them delite in their other vine and other fruites. But we are now in the prayse of this kind of vine. Here the wife is as the fruitfull vine, and the childzen as the oliue plantes. For so the holy Ghost teacheth vs, and the matter it selfe testifieth the same, although the holy Ghost did not thus teach vs at all. For the very Gentiles did highly commend naturall affections, loue and kindnes of one towards another. This doe also the ballets which are vsed amongst vs Germanes testifie, whereby the faithfull and louing affection betwene man and wife is set forth with singular prayses, and that this life hath nothing more ioyfull and excellent then is a faithfull wife and louing to her husband. The same also doe all wise and godly men confesse: not for the pleasure of the flesh, which is greater in whooredom, fornication and other vncleannes. For thereby vncleane lust is enflamed, but in matrimony it is quenched. And the greatest pleasure that a man can haue is this, when his wife is of a kind and a louing heart towards him. This is an excellent gift, and highly to be esteemed, and singularly commended in women. Whereof these swine are vnderly ignorant, which thinke the wife to be nothing else but a swinish poodle of filchy pleasures. Nay she is an excellent instrument planted of God in thy house, that therein she may be as a fruitfull vine. For this cause husbandes ought to loue their wives and childzen, yea more then their owne liues.

Wherefore, these high commendations of matrimony are here set against the venomous tongues both of Satani and of wicked men, wherewith they do so maliciously sclander this kind of life: Also against the corrupt & peruerse iudgement of the flesh, whereby we are pponoked either to a lothing & contemning of this kind of life, or else to impaciencie, when our eyes are blinded in discerning and iudging the benefites and commodities thereof, and are still in beholding of the fautes, the incommodities by troubles that belong

belong to the same. Thus the wiser sort euen amongst the Gentils would not doe. For they did see that there is a naturall affection in the man and the wife towards their children, and a mutual love & faithfulness betwene them selues, & both these things they praised and set forth with greate commendation. So God by the smal number of the wiser sort euen among the Gentiles did overcome the multitude of these viperous tongues which are so venomous & spicefull against this kind of life. How much more then ought we to defend matrimony; (we say) whom the holy Ghost moueth & stirreth vp so to do by these excellent similitudes: whereby he sheweth that God is so delited with the life of married folkes, that not onely he giveth his blessing for the sustentation of this life, but also the blessing of the belly and of the breasts, as Moyses calleth it. This, no doubt would not God doe, if he hated such as are married. For he said vnto Adam: All that groweth vpon the earth shall be vnto thee for foode and sustentance. After the floods also he gaue vnto man the vse of cleane beasts. Yea he giueth vnto matrimony what treasures and riches so euer are in the worlde, and what so euer in nature is conteyned. All these are liuely testimonies that God approueth, spketh and loueth this kinde of life; although the holy Scriptures should speake nothing thereof at all. Moreover, who seeth not that the propagation of man and woman kind is ordained of God? Let vs therefore be mindful of these similitudes & therewith arme our selues against the wicked & peruerse iudgement of reason, against the deuill & venomous tongues, which magnifie and extoll vanitie and abhominable filchynes, and these inestimable gifts they most wickedly dispraise and despise.

Vers. 4. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

Hereto we haue hearde those excellent commendations of matrimony which the holy Ghost setteth forth, to confirme and comfort such as are appoynted to this kinde of life; that they might patiently suffer the incommodities, the troubles and tentations of matrimony; and not followe the iudgement of the worlde, which like vnto the mule and the asse followeth the fence of the flesh and is overcome with these troubles and tentations. The good gifts of God it understandeth not, but some senses it extoll and abhorreth them. For ye shall finde many

¶ *iii.*

to whom it seemeth a great misery to haue manye childre, as though matrimony were ordayned for beastly pleasures onely, and not to this end rather, that we mighte doe acceptable seruice both to God and man, in nourtishing and byrning vp of childre. These men are ignorant of that which is most comfortable in matrimony. For what is to be compared vnto the loue of parentes towards their childre? especially since here thou seest that childre are the greatest portion of Gods blessing. But here againe we haue neede of faith. For the world taketh it not for a blessing when a man getteth his liuing by labour & trauel, suffereth the troubles and vexations of his wife, his childre, his seruantes and such like, whereof in matrimony there are many. These things, I say, the world esteemeth not as blessings, but abhoyreth them as maledictions. But the holy Ghost, to confirme the mindes of the goodly cōmendeth and setteth forth all that he hath hitherto said, by this sweete and comfortable name, and calleth them blessings; to the ende he may stirre vs vp to know God and his giftes rightly, lest that in the middes of his benefits and blessings we should fall to a loathing thereof, as the world is wont to doe, which regardeth not those things which it hath & presently enioyeth, but desireth the things which it hath not. Wherefore this vehement kinde of speech is diligently to be noted, in that he calleth this life blessed and happy, which to the iudgement of reason is miserable and full of calamitie, when he saith: Loe thus shall the man be blessed, &c. What canst thou desire moze? In that thou hast a wife and childre, and liuest with the labour of thy handes, it is in deede the blessing of God. Wherefore thou hast not onely great cause not to be offended but also to giue God thanks for his great blessings.

But how few are there to be found which doe beleue this? And if any doe beleue it, yet though infirmitie they are led away from this faith, and forgetting the blessing, they become impatient, as if they were in the midst of Gods malediction. It is therefore to be wished that this saping of the holy Ghost, as a singular consolation, might be alwayes before the eyes and in the eares of the goodly. For how shall we finde a moze manifest argument that the life of such as are married pleaseth God & this, that their whole liues is nothing else but a blessing? In deede it is commeth to passe oftentimes that they are vexed to the hindes of miserie, and though the offences of their family, their childre, and some times their neigh-

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neighbours. But when they see All things cannot be so pure and so perfect in this our infirmity, but that oftentimes we shall find either some excellency or some lack both within the house and without. But this time of impatience the dayly prayer of the godly doth quench & overcome. And thus must the godly comforte them selves that they are placed among Gods blessings, and live a life blessed of God. This truth the greater and stronger it is, the more top it bringeth. For albeit some troubles do happen, & we sometimes also are overtaken with sinnes; yet is the waye of God omnipotent. Therefore in all tentations the victorie is theirs which stick faithfully thereunto.

These wordes therefore must be received as the oracles of God, and this kinde of life we must acquire with due praise and honour, since that God doth so richly poure out his blessing vpon it. This must we not onely knowe, that we may set it forth and commend it to others, but all of vs which live in this kind of calling, must commend and apply the same also vnto our selves, that whether pouertie, diseases, vexations & troubles of our familie or any other like tentations doe oppress vs; we may embrace the same with patience, resting vpon this most plentifull consolation, that the holy Ghost calleth this state a blessed kinde of life. And this they finde, this they know, and this they doe which feare God and serue him truly as he saith: So shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. For the true seruice of God is to feare God, to trust in God, and to haue thy whole affiance fixed in him. Vpon these godly motions of the mind afterwards followeth obedience in our vocation and other thinges which are commaunded of God. For all these thinges the feare of God doth comprehend. They that feare not God, vnderstand nothing hereof, neither doeth the holy ghost here speake any thing of them.

Verses. The Lord our of Sion blese thee, that thou maiest see the wealth of Ierusalem all the dayes of thy life.

Now, after these high commendations of matrimony, the holy ghost addeth an excellent prayer; wherein he desireth that God himselfe bleesse more & more this kinde of life, and that to such married persons he would giue peace and tranquillity to the common weale. Notte all such prayers haue a promise included, that all

things shall come to passe as they doe pray. For country where he abode: The Lord out of Sion, &c. he doth it because the worship of God was at that time in Sion. Therefore not onely in harts they looked towards that place (as before we haue declared); but they turned their faces also that way when they prayed, because God had promised that he would there dwell; and there would receive the prayers and sacrifices of the people. Hereof come these sayings, To pray before the Lord: To offer before the Lords: To appeare before the Lord, that is to say, in the tabernacle, wherein was the Arke and the mercy seate, to the which God had bounde him self that he would there be found. Therefore they called this place the solitude, the kingdom, the Palace, the glory, the beauty, and the rest of the Lorde, as in the Psalmes and the rest of the Prophets is to be seene.

After the coming of Christ and the publishing of the Gospel, this place had an ende. Therefore we say not now, God blisse thee out of Sion, or out of his holy temple, but: through Christ our Lord. For he is our true mercieseat, whereof the mercieseat of the olde Testament was but a shadowe or a figure. For in Christ dwelleth the godhead corporally. Therefore when we pray unto God, we desire to be heard in the name of Christ and for Christes sake, like as by the example of the olde primitive Church, publike prayers are all finished with this clause: Through Christ our Lord. But hereof somewhat we haue saide before: notwithstanding these things can not be spoken of enough. For this is true Christian knowledge and wisdom, that our cogitations shoulde not be wandring and scattered, but gathered to one object, that is to say, unto Christ, For like as in the olde Testament the people was gathered togither unto the Arke or tabernacle, and was not suffered to sacrifice in Dan, Bethel, Gilgal and other places, whiche the wicked Idolaters did choise unto themselves, so now to come unto the Lorde, there is no way to be sought by invocation of Saintes or any other kind of worship or workes, but by Christ and in Christ alone, according to that saying: Whatsoeuer ye shall aske the father in my name, he will giue you. For God will no where else be found or worshipped, no not in Heauen, but onely in this one person which was borne of the virgine Mary, that is, in Christe Iesu. He is the true mercieseat and the certaine throne of the Godhead where

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where the godhead dwelleth and is founde corporally as these
 sentences of the Gospell doe teach: No man cometh vnto the
 father but by me: I am the way, the truth and the life. Who
 so dare not this oblect, their mindes doe wander in infinite er-
 rours and opinions, as in the example of the religious rabble of
 Pharaes, Pharisees and such like it appeareth. One order choo-
 sect Frances, an other Dominicke, an other Benedict, and o-
 thers likewise finde out diuerse other for their Patroness, by
 whose rule (so a certayne and infallible way) they might come
 vnto life. And what did all these? Examine their heart, and they
 will all say with one consent that they sought God. Nowe, they
 thought God to be such a one in Heauen, that if they were coue-
 red with a Phynix-cowle, if they abstained from fleshe, if they
 luyd without waters, if they touched no money, &c. then God
 would heare them and be mercifull vnto them. Thus forsaking
 the true and onely way which is Christe, they wandered euery
 man after his owne way: no otherwise then did the Jewes, who
 when they had one certayne way sette before them whereby they
 might serue God; namely, if they would goe into the Taberna-
 cle and there worship God; there offer sacrifice vnto him: they
 forsooke the onely and true way, and came to woodes, dales, ri-
 uers, &c. Thus, whilst they thought to pacifie and please God,
 they more greediously offended him: as in the Prophetes we may
 plainly see in diuerse places, where God saith, that he detested
 the wayes which they did choose vnto them selves, and that he
 would not be founde of them. For why did they not keepe the
 true and infallible way so plainly set forth and taught by the word
 of God?

This haue I spoken to the end we may reade with knowledge
 what which the prophet saith heres The Lorde our of Sion. For
 he is constrained to make mention of this place for the quashing
 of Idolatrie. For God did reuenge vnto them, that in this onely
 place he would be worshipped. Eitherfoe vnder the veile and sha-
 dowe of the promise, they worshipped Christe alwaies who was inclu-
 ded in the promise. But now that Sion is destroyed and gone,
 the treasure is opened, that is to say, Christe, who then was hidde
 in the promise, is vnder a veile. Eitherfoe let vs remember
 that all such places must be applied vnto Christe. Like as also
 we are taught by experience that in temptations there is no con-

Isolation whereby afflicted mindes may be comforted and tryed
 by, no not in God, but that onely which is in Christ. For it is not
 onely persons, but also horrible to thinke of God without Christ.
 For besides that Satan is then able most easily to oppresse vs
 with the brightness of Gods paines, there is also great danger
 euen in this, that God will not so be comprehended or found. We
 must therefore rest and dwell in this onely object in the which God
 sheweth not to be his will, euen Christ. But they which seek a
 thing without Christ, in their tentations shall feele by their owne
 perill how dangerous a thing that is.

But you will say, howe doth God not bleas out of Sion any
 more? Euen so, that thou shalt see the weakh or prosperitie of Je-
 rusalem, that is to say, God for the loue he beareth to godly mar-
 ried persons and such as feare God, will giue polithe peace, which
 is a thing most necessary, not onely that they may be able the bet-
 ter to provide for their liuing; but also and especially to bring up
 their children honestly and in the feare of God. And this was the
 cause why cities were first builded, that men ioyning their strenght
 & power together, might be able to defend them and cheate from
 the force and crueltie of others. Afterwards, when there was not
 ayde and helpe enough in one cite, many toynded their powers to-
 gether. So common weales and kingdomes were first begonne, to
 stablish and mainteyne peace, which married persons haue neede
 of. Nowe that nature did thus unite and ioyne these things to-
 gether and taught men so to do, reason it selfe doth see and perceaue.
 But the true cause the holy Ghost here setteth forth to witte, that
 these things come of the blessing which the Lord giueth to mar-
 ried persons, but specially to the godly, who ought to knowe and
 acknowledge that the first blessing is to feare God: the next is to
 haue wife and children: the third, to enioy polithe peace and qui-
 etnes. What wouldst thou haue more? All therefore for thy viue
 and aloue plannes which thou hast in thy house, thou shalt see that
 the Lord giueth Kings, Princes, lawes and iudgements: where-
 fore for the defence and preservation of the common weale and
 peace.

And here we are admonished that since Kings, Princes and
 Magistrates are appointed for the benefite of married persons and
 families, they ought like wiseto giue obedience vnto them; and
 whatsoeuer else they haue neede of, whiles they togith for the pro-
 seruation

seruation of peace. For they are the ministers of God, as Paule calleth them, giuen of God for this purpose, that we may enioy his blessings in peace. Which peace how great a benefite it is, the common proverbe of the Germanes witnesseth, which saith, that a man which hath two kind, should giue the one that he may quietly enioy the other. For what anyleth it thee if thou haue thy house full of riches and are not able to defend the same against theues and robbers? Seeing therefore that this is done by the Magistrate, yea seeing that iudgement and lawes doe restore that to the owner which is unrightly taken away, good cause there is why honour and obedience is to be giuen to the Magistrate, as the minister of Gods blessings, which he bestoweth to the married persons. For this third blessing of matrimony is here recited of Dauid, that they may see the wealth and welfare of Ierusalem, that is to say, that they may see Ierusalem flourish, first by true religion and sounde doctrine, and secondly by godly Magistrates. For these are the benefites and blessings; not onely of one house, but of all Ierusalem. Thus the holy Ghost commendeth vnto vs the giftes of God in a goodly order. The first is the feare of God. This feare comprehendeth the thinges which are contained in the first table. Nowe, for the feare of God, afterwarde God giueth house and familye. Thirdly, for houses and families well ordered, and gouerned in the feare of God, followeth also the thirde blessing, that is to say, a happy common weale.

Wherefore let vs learne to vnderstande rightly the benefites which we receaue by godly Magistrates, and for them let vs be thankful. Againe let vs learne that this gift of God, to haue good Magistrates, is giuen vnto those and for those maried persons and those families which feare God. Which gift they may also doe enioy, but yet no otherwise then swine doe their drasse and swill, without any thanks giuing vnto God, or thankful remembrance of this or any other of Gods giftes. For as the destruction of Sodome was differred because of Loth, so oftentimes for a fewe godly families or a godly Prince, God blesteth the whole common weale.

Verse. 6. That thou mayst see thy childrens children and peace vpon Israel.

It is giuen to many to haue children in matrimony, and to many it is not. Therefore we sayd before, that this is a commendation and not a promise pertaining to euery man particularly, but generally vnto matrimony & to the kinde of life it self. So vnto some it is giuen to see the children and nephewes of their children. To some againe matrimony is all together barren and fruiteles. For these things the Lord distributeth to euery one as is most expedient for them. Notwithstanding, the godly married persons must pray vnto God for them, and most commonly also they doe enioy them. And maruelous is that naturall affection and loue especially in olde men which they beare vnto their childrens children: for they loue them more tenderly then their owne. Wherefore, for as much as this Psalme tendereth to the setting forth and bewtifying of matrimony, and wisheth all felicity to the married persons, the holy ghost addeth this moreouer concerning their long and fruitfull posteritie, as a singular comfort, because he would omit none of those good blessings whiche are giuen of God to suche as are married, though not to all, yet to the most parte. Nowe; although we sayd before that all such prayers haue a promise included in them, yet notwithstanding this is the maner of corporall promises, that God giueth them so as is most profitable and expedient for euery man. Wherefore we must apply the promise which is included in this prayer, to the kind of life it selfe, and not to euery married person, namely, that such as liue in godly matrimony and feare God, shall encrease and multiply vnto a fruitfull and a great posteritie, and that for their sake the blessing shall flowe vnto all the people: as he addeth in this clause: peace vpon Israel, that is to say, all wealth and prosperitie I wish vnto Israel for thy sake.

Thus the Psalme commendeth and defendeth matrimony against those spitefull scanders and reproches of the world, which can not iudge but according to the sense and feeling of the flesh. Wherefore, as it is offended with the troubles and burthens of matrimony: so is it offended also with those things which happen in ciuill government, when it must obey lawes, pay tribute to the Prince, or beare any other like burthen. For it would so liue that what soeuer is best or most pleasant in matrimony, that onely it would enioy without all griefe or molestation. As, we may see, there be many whiche marry wiues, because they imagine that there

there is nothing in matrimony but mere loue, amorous desires, and fleshly pleasures. In like maner how many shall ye find, which though an inordinate loue and desire of glorie, seeke to rule and be in authoritie? But afterwarde, when in matrimony they must suffer troubles and vexations, and in politike government, enuy, hatred, cursed speaking, and sleanders, they cry out that they were deceiued and become impatient. Yea, it can not otherwise be but that these things must so come to passe. For that which is the best and most excellent in both kindes of life, the blessing of the Lord I meane, they nothing esteeme. Wherefore we must haue a speciall regard vnto the blessing: and we must haue also the word of God before our eyes, to the ende that when all other things are full of daungers, full of troubles, miseries and vexations, we may rest and repose our selues vpon the good will and pleasure of our God.

Likewise in the Church, are not all thinges, I pray you, full of troubles, vexations, and wooll calamities in so great a multitude of prophane & godles people? Notwithstanding all these things, when we looke to the will of God, are easily bozne and overcome. So let vs also in matrimony consider first the word of God: then the gift which the Lord bestoweth vpon vs when he giueth wife and children: and thirdly Gods blessing and peace in the politike state and common weale. For these giftes thus acknowledged, let vs afterwarde giue thanks vnto God. So shall God be prouoked to bestow a greater blessing vpon vs: whereas if these thinges be not done, we shall prouoke him to take from vs those giftes which we haue. So great Empires, kingdoms, cities & common weales might longer prosper and flourish then they do. But because they be vnthankfull vnto God and contemne his word, they come to ruine and miserably perish. Let vs therefore learne to be thankfull, and the blessing of God shall abound in vs.

The 119. Psalme.

They haue often times afflicted, &c.

This psalme consisteth of two partes. In the former he giueth thanks to God for the defence and continuall deliuerance of the people of God. In the later part he maketh his prayer against the

The argument of the psalme.

aduersaries, & in praying he prophesieth withal. Both these serue for our instruction, and also conteyne an exhortation to patience vnder the crosse, which pertaineth not to one age or tyme, but as the continuall history of the Church doth shew, to all times and to the whole life of man. Moreover we doe here comprehend both Churches, of the Iewes and of the Gentiles, as Paule also in a manner ioyneth them both together when he saith: First to the Iewe and then to the Grecian. For as touching the Church of people of the Iewes, it appeareth by the histories that they were placed in the middes of their enemies, as a goodly rose in the midst of thornes. On the southside the Ismaelites, the Arabians & other cruell people vexed them. On the west part the Egyptians, the Ethiopians, the Troglodites and other like. On the North side the Philistines, the Assyrians, &c. So the Church after the destruction of the Synagoge, is compassed every way with enemies, and Christ, according to the psalme, reigneth in the middes of his enemies. Thus were they often times and many wayes afflicted. But herewithall God shewed this miracle, that when they were so afflicted, he alwayes deliuered them. And thus was the kingdom of Israel a miraculous kingdom, in that the Lord when he would correct and chastise them, suffered the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, Assyrians and Babylonians to haue victorie ouer them. Again, when they seemed to be utterly oppressed, they victoriously preuailed against their enemies. So continued this kingdom in despite of the cruel nations round about it, and of Satan him selfe: as is to bee seene in the bookes of the Kings and also of the Chronicles. Now, because this people had both threatenings and promises set before them as touching their afflictions & deliuerance, this was vnto them a great consolation even when they were afflicted & spoyled, that they knew that all these things came to passe not by the wil or power of their enemies, and much lesse by their righteousness or desertes, but onely by the will of God thus punishing and chastising his people, yea threatening and forewarning them by the Prophetes that he would so punish the disobedient. This is no small consolation, that in thy affliction and calamitie thou mayst be able to say: this is scourge of God thus correcting me and visiting my sinnes: It is not the wrath of God or the merite and deserting of my aduersary.

These thinges must we apply vnto our selues also, to the ende that

that when we be oppressed, we may comfort our selves that we are not oppressed by the power of death, staine, hell, or any creature, but by the will of God our creator, afflicting vs and punishing our sinnes & ingratitude, and yet so that he leaueh vnto vs this fartherly promise, the he will not forsake vs. And such a figure of the whole kingdome of Christ is set forth in the Apocalyps. For how much doth it speake of euill angels, of cruell beasts & such other plagues of the Church which should enter into the Church & the kingdome of Christ, God so permitting. Notwithstanding consolation followeth afflictions and calamities, and though the Church be neuer so sore afflicted, yet shal it continue and endure, & at the length shall overcome and victoriously triumph.

But this psalme agreeth especially vnto our time, wherein the Church hath bene most grievously afflicted both vnder the Turks and also vnder the Romish Bishops, yea and as it were bitterly abolished: So that if we way the matter well, it may appeare that the condition of the Jewes in Babylon was better then the state of the Church vnder Antichrist: where the true use of the Sacraments was taken away, the benefit of Christ darkned, faith spemgished, no true seruice of God bled, no true good works exercised: generally all thinges which pertaine to true religion were cleane abolished or most miserably deformed and defaced. Wherefore, like as the Jewes in Babylon were put from the sight & use of the temple, the sacrifices, the ceremonies & all politike government: so the Church vnder Antichrist had no true ministry, no true seruice of God, no her owne kingdome and government, but was constrained to obserue and keepe the babylonicall and heretish rites and ceremonies of the papistes. Thus was the wrath, and thus haue bene the punishments of God in a maner all one in the Church of the Jewes and the Gentiles.

Wherefore it is most necessary that we lay hold vpon this consolation, that, as the psalme sayth, we are afflicted, we are cast downe, we are troden vnder foote, but we are not overcome. For the Church shall stand and remaine invincible, notwithstanding that through great incredulitie and incredible infirmities the victory therof is hidde & can not be seene. As it was vnder the Pope, where all scholes and all Churches taught nothing elsse but the blasphemous doctrine of the Romish bishops and docting dreames of the Panks. This was the very same thing that the psalme 73.

complayneth of, where it sayth: We see not our signes, and yet God had euen then his Church; although it was very litle; obscure, & miserably deformed. Before the kingdome of the Romish Antichrist what a swarme of heretikes sprang up? Of whom also the Church was soze vexed and afflicted, euen as the Iewes were afflicted of the nations which dwelled nere unto them. And like as the captiuitie followed that affliction of the Iewes, so the kingdome of the Romish Bishopshis that captiuitie which followed the outrageous furie of the heretikes, & out of the which also haue flowed all the euills, and plagues which haue bene euer since in the Church, as out of a foule sinke and filthy poble. But now by the great mercie of God the captiuitie beginneth to be turned, the temple is repaired, and the true seruice of God restored.

This Psalm, after my iudgement; speaketh generally of all such troubles and afflictions of the Church, as haue bene at all times & in all ages: As first that the kingdome of the Iewes when they were yet vnder good Kinges, was mightely assailed, but yet not utterly ouertome: And that the people afterwards were spoiled of the Assyrians and Babylonians and carried away captiue, but not cleane forsaken. For they were againe deliuered out of captiuitie, and in their owne land enioyed the promise concerning Christ. Thus speaketh this Psalm first of the Iewish Church. Afterwards it comprehendeth as a prophecy, the state and condition of the Church of the Gentiles: to witte, that God would preserue and defend it against all heretikes, against all the rage and fury of the world, against the kingdome of the Romish Antichrist, & moreover against al the tentations of sinne which bere and oppresse the conscience. Thus must we apply this Psalm to all times and ages of the Church, to all chaunges and alterations, all daungers of the world, the flesh, sinne, the lawe, death, and the gates of hell. For the world assaileth it with power & wisdom: the deuill with desperation and dubitation: heretikes with errors in faith and religion, and the conscience with sinnes. In all these perills we say: Blessed be the Lord God, who suffereth vs not to be reſpted aboue that we are able to beare. In dede we must be tempted and tried, but in the tentation he will giue an outſcape: besides this; that he giueth vs strength also to beare the tentation vntill the time of deliuerance come. This benedicte Dauid here ſetſeth forth, and ſheweth vnto vs the ſtate of his people, to the ende we may thereby

learne

learne this comfort, that like as he preferred that people, euen so wil he also preferue us. For we haue one and the same God, the same spirit, the same word, the same promises, & by this all things else, whatsoeuer. Wherefore we may say and sing with David.

Verse. 1. They haue often tymes afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:

Verse. 2. They haue often tymes afflicted me from my youth, but they could not preuaile against me.

He nameth no certain enemy, to the ende he may comprehend all. Where he saith: From my youth, he understandeth all the time from their primitive Church (as we call it) untill Israel beganne first to be y^e people of God. For albeit we ever passe those thinges which are most auncient and of greatest antiquitie (as the primitive Church is in deede worthy to be praised) yet God regardeth not this difference. For in all times and euen in the last ages of the Church he gaue notable Prophets to the people of Israel: as before the captiuitie Esay, of all other the most excellent: after the captiuitie Aggeus, Zachary and others. In the meane time betwene Moyses and these, were Helias, Heliseus, &c. So we see that the primitive Church was moze pure from heretikes and infected opinions. But yet notwithstanding there were some notable Prophets and other excellent men euen in the later times. And when y^e roote of Jesse seemed now to be withered, yet God blessed by Anna, Symeon, Zachary & Elisabeth. For God preferueth his Church though it be neuer so much assailed and oppressed, according to his promise. Ouely let vs open our eyes that we may see from whence this cometh.

And here we may not looke to those thinges which the world especially esteemeth and magnifieth, but we must behold the Church as it is afflicted, oppressed, & full of calamitie. For this is the true face of the Church of God, that it is weake; emiraned with all deadly engines, and compassed with all the furies of the deuill, the world, the flesh, Sinne and death. These thinges he that will not behold, doe flieeth and abhorreth aheny, shall neuer finde out the true Church in deede. For that is not the true picture and image of the Church which the painters set forth, which paynt her as a goodly virgin, as a citie well armed, adorne and beautified. In deede that is a true picture, but not according to the eyes of the flesh. But Igit

small eyes doe see this great bewty, that Christ is her husband, & begot her vnto him self by the holy Ghost; bewitched her & made her glorious with his owne blood, with his merites and with his righteousness. Of all these thinges the flesh can see nothing, can iudge nothing, but seeth rather the contrary, how she is subject to most bitter hatred, malice, vexations & torments. Wherefore if it would paint her out in such sort as he seeth and beholdeth her, then must it paint and set her forth as a deformed and a poore maiden, sitting in a dangerous wood or desart in the midst of cruell and hungry Lyons, beares, wolues, swine & venomous serpents: also in the middes of outrageous & furpous men, attempting with sword, fire and water to destroy her, and to roote her out from the face of the earth: As there is in the Apocalyps set forth a goodly picture (then y^e which there is nothing moze excellent in that booke) that the church as a desolate woman, dyeth from the old serpent or dragon persecuting her & her child. Wherefore these wordes which Dauid here vseth, may very wel be applied to her: Many times haue mine enemies afflicted me, many times haue they vexed me.

But this affliction seemeth rather to be an vtter destruction, if we follow the iudgement of the flesh: As if the enemies did so p^{er}uail and overcome, that the Church were vtterly oppressed and banquished for euer: As we all find by our owne experience in our conflicts which priuately we suffer in our hartes, when Satan testifieth & confoundeth our consciences. For then are reyled by such terroze, that no man can otherwise iudge but that the victorie is Satans, oppressing vs with heauy & bitter cogitations, with tentations, vexations and anguish of spirit; & spoiling vs (as to the flesh it seemeth) of all the sweete consolations which by the merite of Christ and the word are offered vnto vs. According to this sence we may well say: Often times haue they afflicted mee. For this seemeth to be, not onely an affliction, but an vtter desolation & destruction. As we priuately feele this euery one in our owne hartes and consciences: so the whole body of the church in all times doeth confesse that it is vehemently assailed with strong and mighty armies of most deadly enemies of all nations, and oppugned with engines of all tentations & tribulations; euen from her youth, that is, from the time that, when the people were deliuered out of Egypt, they began to be knowne from other nations, and to be the people of God.

But

But here the church and the childzen of God comfort and reyse
 by them selues agayne, hauing good experience that in all these
 calamities God shewed forth his power, and not onely remitted
 their sinne, but also turned away the punishment thereof, so that
 still there remainned a Church, and the practises of their enemies
 were brought to naught. Wherefore the Prophet here, not onely
 repeateth the daunger and calamitie of the Church, but with great
 ioi he addeth withall an exhortation, that euery member of this
 body should praise the mercie and goodnes of the Lorde, and saye:
 They could not preuaile against me. This is a singular consolati-
 on, not only for the whole Church of God, but also for euery one
 of vs particularly, against the proud bragges of our enemies, and
 the great hope which they haue conceiued, that they shall preuaile
 against vs. Heretikes and sectaries doe gloze that they shall haue
 the victorie. The Pope vaunting of his owne strength & the pow-
 er of Princes, cryeth out: we shall overcome. Satan ioyneith with
 them both and repleth by such troubles, that it seemeth doubtfull
 to whom the victorie will fall. This oppresseth, not onely euery
 man priuately with great heauines and sorrow, but also the whole
 Church. As we by experience did proue in the assembly gathered
 at August, where it seemed that our enemies should utterly haue
 swallowed vs by. But did not we there find these wordes to be full
 of consolation? They could not preuaile. This consolation we must
 hold fast euen when we are killed, as by the examples of the pri-
 mitiue Church we are taught. For the Church is as it were wa-
 tered with the blood of the faithful, that the greater increase may
 come thereof. Now, like as these wordes of the Prophet are righte-
 ly applyed to that persecution which is done with the sword, so
 must they be applyed also to the assaults of heretikes and Secta-
 ries: For it is their propertie to boast and bragge of the victorie,
 & alwayes to triumph before the victorie. But how so euer our ad-
 uersaries triumph & gloze, let vs endeavour to hold fast the word,
 and what so euer we doe, let vs apply it wholly to the amplifying
 of the kingdom of Christ and his word. If then (as needes it must
 be) assaults and battells doe follow, yet let vs sing with Dauid:
 They could not preuaile. For albeit they kill vs, yet neither the
 Pope, nor any other heretiks, nor the Turke, nor Satan him self
 shall euer be able to quench the word: Neither yet shall they pre-
 uaile against vs if we stedfastly abide in the word. In deede this

22. iii.

will we graunt vnto Satan, that he is stronger then we, and herebye vs many wayes. For many are the troubles of I iust, but God will deliuer them out of all. And why? Because it is the word of God which they pofesse & teach: and moreover it is Gods owne cause which they defend. Wherefore although the Pope attempt and practise neuer so much mischief, and goe about to styre vpp the whole world against vs: although false brethren which walke not in true & sound doctrine, continually bere vs, although Satan him selfe neuer cease to reple up the gates of hell against vs, yet will we sing with David euen to the ende: They coulde not preuaile, yea and that onely because of the word.

Vers. 3. The plowers plowed vppon my backe & they made long furrowes.

See what unlike and almost contrary thinges he ioyneth here together. Before he comforted the saythfull, that the enemies should neuer be able to doe any thing against the Church, because it is invincible and can not be overcome: and here he complayneth that they plow vpon the backe of the Church, & make such furrowes, as seeme to be of an infinite length. This is an offence therefore which vehemently troubleth the godly, that God suffereth Satan and the world so long to rage, so long to bere & afflict the Church, that he giueth successe vnto their wicked counsellors and attempts: that he suffereth the vngodly euen then to prosper, when they are most worthy to be punished with all maner of tormentes, and bitterly consumed. On the other side, the godly, the more they pray and the more they hope, the lesse seemeth their prayer and their hope to take effect: Every day are they more and more afflicted: euery day there is lesse & lesse hope left. Wherefore this similitude is well applied vnto them in that they are compared to a ground which is continually plowed: wherein such furrowes are drawen as seme to haue no end: as though there were no god which either seeth their calamity, or the impietie and outragious cruelty of the enemies of the word. He signifieth therefore that they haue neede of continuall patience, not for a day or two, but all the dayes of their life. So that they which haue the worde must assuredly purpose and determine, neuer to departe from God, although they should suffer the same afflictions a thousand yeres together. How

many

many haue we seene in these our dayes which haue fallen away (yea and such also as sometime did stand,) when the fruite of the word was hindered through persecution, like as the Sunne dyeth by and withereth the cozne that is sown in a stony ground.

Wherefore we must learne that the patience of the faithfull, as it is in this verse described, is such as is ready to offer their backs vnto the plowers, and to suffer not for a day nor for a yeare, but for the time of their whole life. For he compareth afflictions to the long plowing in the backe of the faithfull: Like as our Sautour Christ also signifieth when he saith: He that continueth to the ende, shall be saued. For to beginne is not enough. And that patience which hath her boundes and limites prescribed, may be found euen among the Gentiles. But the patience of Christians is perpetuall, that is to say, such a patience as seemeth to be infinite and without ende, for the ende thereof doth not appeare. Like as on the other side, the ende of their consolation appeareth not: So that those thinges which seeme to be moste contrary, are here ioyned together, that is to say, the length and the long continuance of the furrowes in the back of the faithfull, and the victory of the faithfull singing of those which dyne the plow: They could not preuaile.

Whereouer this great and long continuance of the furrowes in the backe of the faithfull includeth suche an offence as no carnall wisdom is able to ouercome: namely, that the wicked doe not ouerly prosper, but their felicitie also continueth long; so that it seemeth to be as a reward of their tyranny, their persecution & malice against the church. For if God would suffer their tyranny but for a litle time, & speedely reward the according to their deserts, we should al then say that God is mindful of his chyldren, & angry with the wicked. But now, since impietie and wickednes flourish many yeres together, and the wicked stil continue and encrease in great felicitie, without punishment, the same is verified of them which Diogenes said of Harpulus, that they seme to giue a liuely testimony against the gods. Yea the godly are so vehemently tempted through this long continuance & fall so farre, that they thinke God hath no regard of them. Wherefore we must so arme our selues with Christian patience, that albeit we feele the tedious & long continuance of these furrowes, we be not therfore offended; but when one temptation is ouercome, we must prepare our selues to an other. For our

backes must be alwayes ready to beare the long continuance of these sorowes.

This is the first part of the psalme, in the which he confesseth the diuine miracles and miraculous power of God, whereby he preferueth his chilozen not only against þe woꝛld, but also against sinne, death and the deuill, and praiseþ God foꝛ that he giueth victoꝛy to those that are ouercome, and putterh those to flight which doe ouercome. This toful ende and this successe he willeth vs to looke and waite foꝛ, and exhoꝛteth vs to patience. Now he turneth him selfe to prayer, and not onely prayeth, but also promisseth to the enemies of the Gospel, that although they obstinarily continue in afflicting the faithfull without checke oꝛ punishment, yet shall their ruine & ouerthrow be such, that they shall neuer rise againe: as experience doth shewe. Foꝛ I pray you, what kingdom from the beginning of the woꝛld hath alwayes continued and prospered? The places and spaces of the earth doe remaine void and desolate & the kingdoms are gone as though they had neuer bene. Againe, the crueltie & tyranny of the kingdomes of the woꝛld was neuer so great, that it was able to oppresse the church. Foꝛ the Church still continueth & shall continue to the ende of the woꝛld, as followeth.

Verse. 4. The righteous Lord hath cut the cordes of the wicked.

These wordes are so full of consolation, that to the chilozen of God in their calamities and afflictions, nothing can be moꝛe comfortable. Foꝛ they knowe that no munitions, no furniture of war can be so strong. Firste of all therefore, wey and consider why he calleth the Lord Righteous, and you shall see that he so doth, because that, when a man considereth according to the iudgement of the fleshe, the thinges which are here done, and how God governeth and ruleth the same, it seemeth no otherwise but that he is vnrightheous and vniust in suppoꝛting the tyranny of the wicked with great riches, power, dignitie, &c. When reason seeth this, it can iudge nothing else, but that, if there be a God, he is vniust. Foꝛ firste of all thus doth reason gather: If there be a God, he is able to resist the wicked, and utterly to destroy them. Foꝛ to be a God is to be almighty. Againe, thus can hall reason argueth: If there be a God, he must needes knowe those thinges which are done in the woꝛld. Foꝛ it can not be said of God, that he is ignorant of any thing

thing. Now, what else followeth heereof, but that if God knowe these thinges to be cruellly and vniustly done, and is able to resist them, he ought also to be no lesse willing to doe the same. For if we thinke that he wil not doe that whiche he knoweth and is able to doe, it must follow that he is not good, but euil: not iust, but vniust. Nowe lay these chinges togither. If God haue power, wisdom and goodnes in him: if he be able to helpe: if he knowe how and also be willing to help, why are all these thinges done and gouerned in the world in such sorte, that the wicked haue power, riches and dignitie, as a rewarde of their impietie? and contrariwise the godly for their pietie and godlines are many wayes and most cruellly afflicted? All these thinges are a liuely testimony against God, as befoze we said of Diogenes. This argument of Epicurus and such like atheists, is to the flesh inuincible. Wherefoze reason beeing altogether blinded and wrapped in these snares, inclineth to this opinion, that there is no God, or else that he regardeth not the affaires of men.

Of this offence and stumbling blocke the holy Ghost warneth vs when he attributeth this name vnto God, that he is righteous, whom vnirighteousnes and impietie pleaseth not. Therefore although he suffer the wicked to flourish for a time, yet at the last he cutteth their cordes, that is, he destroyeth both their power and them, accordyng to that saying: Thou art not a God that louest wickednes. Wherefoze let Christians learne to iudge, not by that which presently they see, but by that which the word of God promisseth and shall assuredly come to passe: to witte, that the wicked when they haue long plowed vpon the backs of the faithfull and many wayes afflicted them, shal perish at the length. For God is iust, and his iustice wil not suffer the righteous to be oppressed.

Verse. 5. Let them that hate Sion bee confounded and turned back.

This (as befoze I haue said) is a prayer. But ye know that in euery prayer there is a promise included, which promise this word Righteous doth expresse in the former verse with a singular vehemencie, to the ende we shoulde not murmur, or blasphemie God, as though he were not mindfull of vs, or had no regard of vs. Now, where he saith: Let them be confounded & turned back,

it is an exposition of that which he saide before, that their corpes should be cut, that is to say, their kingdoms, their power, their riches, their lawes, and finally their whole politike body and common weale should be brought to nought: as it befell to Babylon, Nimue, Ierusalem, Athens, Cozinch, Thebe, Rome, and chiefly to all kingdoms and common weales which did not submit them selues vnto the Gospell. For when they proudly stretched out their neckes and set them selues against Christ their King, and by their power sought to oppresse him, they were destroyed. In like manner must we also pray, and certainly looke for the execution of Gods vengeance vpon those which at this day haue set them selues against the Gospell: as the Pope and his Bishoppes, with all their faction, and with all the Kings and Princes of the earth which maintaine and defende their impietie: for at the last they shall be confounded. But the Gospell and the worde of the Lord shall endure for ever. For the name of Christ shall neuer be oppressed, but being faithfully called vpon, shall alwaies be ready to help the afflicted, and shall cut the corpes now of this wicked man, and now of that.

Thus the holy Ghost comforteth vs sundry wayes. For when we haue learned that Satan is such a spirite as neuer ceaseth to tempt and to bere vs (so that when he can not overcome vs by the greatnes and the multitude of tentations, he goeth about to doe it by the tediousnes and long continuance thereof) he would haue vs to comfort our selues herewith, that albeit these tentations continue long, yet notwithstanding they shall haue an ende. And since we are so warned both of the continuance and of the ende thereof, it is the more easie for vs to beare them. Here is to be noted also that he sheweth to whom he wisheth euill, namely to those which hate Sion. And that hatred which they bare against Sion, was an hatred against God. For in that Satan hateth the Church, he doth it not onely in respect of men, but because he hateth God him selfe whom the church prayseth and magnifieth. Moreover, Sion was a place which God had chosen vnto him self. Like as therefore God had chosen that place to shew his great loue towards it: so had Satan chosen the same to shewe his malice against it; and with all his power to bere it. In like manner not onely Satan, but also the malignant Church of the Pope doth persecute vs, not because we are euil in the sight of the world. For this they could wel suffer,

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suffer, yea & would be glad if they might heare that we are whorers, mongers & murderers as they are. But the true cause why they so deadly hate and persecute vs is this, for that it greiveth them that we in their eyes are innocent as touching the second table, and also obedient to the first, wherein we are commaunded to honour, serue and prayse the Lord, to feare him, to trust in his mercie, &c.

Verse. 6. Let them be as the grasse on the toppes of the houses, which withereth afore it commeth forth.

This is a goodly psalme for the sundry, excellent, and most apte similitudes conteyned therein, whereby the holy Ghost painteth out those great maiesties & principalities of the world, which fight against the gospel. A litle before he compared them to plowers drawing out furrowes of a marvellous length. To whom he so compareth them, not in this respect, as though it were graunted vnto them so long to abuse their power, wealth and riches, but in respect of the great tediousnes, griefe, and anguish of those which suffer the plowers, the furrowes, the wounds, and treading vnder foote. For vnto them it seemeth a tedious, a long, and as it were an infinite plowing. Wherefore they desire to be deliuered, and neuer so litle carrying, through this tediousnes and anguish of hart, seemeth to them intolerable. Against this wearines and this tediousnes therefore he comforteth the faithfull with this similitude of grasse in the toppe of the house. As if he sayd: Why seemeth the time so long and so tedious vnto thee? Why doest thou not learne to vnderstand what these plowers thy aduersaries be? Diddest thou neuer see grasse growing in the toppes of houses? Who did euer complaine that that grasse flourished so long? who euer went about to plucke it by? As though it were not wont of it selfe to wither and vanish away. Learne therefore that the very same is the state and condition of thine aduersaries. Thus with one similitude he fighteth against an other. But if a man could effectually beleue that this similitude was made and here set downe by the holy Ghost & close by the same fully in his heart, he should feare neither the Turke nor the Pope, with all his cruel Prelates, nor the tyranny of Princes, but should condemne them all, and as litle regard them as the grasse on the toppes of the houses.

He setteth
of the grasse
in the house
topp, against
the similitude
of the plowers.

But behold the outward shew of this grasse. If any childe should see it, he would esteeme it to be better then any barley (for to barley it is most like) since it groweth not as other thinges doe vpon the earth, but in an higher and moze notable place, & loberth the toppes of the houses. But take a man that knoweth these thinges, and he will say it is nothing else but a goodly shewe & resemblance without any fruite. Thus hath the holy Ghost chosen this similitude to teach vs, not to wish that tyrannes may be like grasse, but to knowe that they are in deede most like vnto grasse on the house toppes, which withereth away befoze the haruest time come, or any man goe about to cut it downe. Senacherib who besieged Ierusalem, did slie ouer kingdoms, oppressed & trode downe all things vnder his feete: therefore he could not be counted of Ezechia and others like vnto grasse, and yet befoze he achieved that he went about, he was compelled, not without great feare and also much slaughter of his souldiers, to reise his siege, and he him selfe also most miserably perished. So Pharao seemed mightely to growe and encrease, not vpon the earth, but in the ayre & vppon the house toppes: but the miserable Iewes were oppressed and troden vnder foote like myxe in the streetes. This is a resemblance of grasse, not withering, but freshly flourishing. But how quickly did it wither and vanish to nothing? For when Pharao did verely thinke to oppresse them, he was suddenly oppressed him selfe and perished in the waters.

Such an image of tyrannes and tyranny the holy Ghost paynteth out vnto vs in this place. Why then shouldest thou feare? Why shouldest thou tremble? Why shouldest thou despayre, as though thou haddest neuer seene most flourishing grasse within few dayes to wither away of it owne accord, or diddest not knowe the nature of it to be such as can not long continue? Achanaſius when Iulianus the Emperour did many wayes afflict both him & the whole Church, & fought, not onely with crueltie, but also with craft and subtiltie against the faithfull, in so much that others, as it were in a terrible tempest, were vterly discouraged and past all hope of deliuerance, sayd that this persecution of Iulian was not a tempest but a litle cloude. In deede this heart was full of fayth which could beleue, that Iulianus was like, not to a terrible and a violent tempest, not to a mighty black cloude wrapping all things in darknes, but vnto a very litle cloude which the Sunne doth quickly,

quickly consume. In like manner must we also exterminate and diminish the power of our aduersaries, & set at naught all their proud bragges and all their cruelties: not in respect of our owne strength, but because they are of them selves nothing else but a bubble in the water, grasse on the house toppes, and a very shadow: rather then men: besides this, that they prouoke God also against them selves whose fury and cruelty compared vnto his power, is a thing more vaine then grasse on the house toppes, or a bubble in the water: for it is nothing else but a bare and a naked shew, which seemeth to be something when in deede it is nothing. So are all the attempts of the aduersaries full of threatenings, but in the ende they come to nothing.

This is the wisdom of Christians, to diminish the power of the aduersaries, & contrariwise to amplify the word & the mighty protection of the Lord. The deuill, sinne, death and other spiritual tentations are great: but a Christian can make a distinction of greatnes. For greatnes is vnderstand two manner of wayes. The one is according to the eye, which the eye iudgeth after the outward shew: the other is according to the truth, which the truth iudgeth after the word. The greatnes therefore of sinne, death, wicked kings, Princes and Bishops is that which is according to the eye onely: For God which saith: Be of good comfort: I haue overcome the world: Also, Feare not those which can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soule, the same God alone (I say) is the very true greatnes, to the which if you compare Satan and al the fury of the whole world, what are they else but a bubble? what are they else but grasse? but light strawe and stubble? But when they are considered with our God, then doe they terrifie with a false fearefull shew and seeme to be great in deede.

Wherefore Christians must iudge, not according to their opinion, but according to the truth. For an opinion is that which reason bringeth forth besides the word: but truth is grounded vpon the word, which iudgeth the fury & the crueltie of the world raging against the faithfull to be like vnto grasse vpon the house tops. This promise being settled and surely fixed in the minde, confirmeth the gooly against the great power (as to reason it seemeth) of the world & Satan. Like as on the other side, where the word is not, the mind detoured through a terrible shew of truth & the iudgement of reason, is oppressed with terror. These things must not so be taken as

This iudgement that the enemies are like grasse and therefore shall perish, he calleth a promise.

though we did utterly condemne þe power of Princes & of þe world, which we count to be þe creature of God, but theiſe presumption & the abuse of theiſe power is it that we condemne, becauſe they fight theſewith againſt God and hiſ church. Let them be Princes on the earth: Let them ble theiſe power and authoritie in the world, but when they will needes make warre in heauen, and with theiſe power go about to invade and oppreſſe the world, this is horrible, this is execrable and damnable. And whoſo compareth them to bubbles, to graſſe, to ſtubble, yea and to nothing, he ſaith truly, he judgeth rightly. For why doe they fight againſt God? Thinke they that we knowe not what God is? and what man is? what the creature is, and what the Creator is?

Wherefoſe they are rightly compared to graſſe on the houſe toppes: foſe moſe contemptuouſly the holy Ghoſt could not ſpeake of them, For this graſſe is ſuch, that it ſoone withereth away befoſe the ſickle be put vnto it. Yea, no man thinketh it woſthy to be cut downe, no man regardeth it, euery man ſuffereth it to bragge foſe a while, and to ſhew it ſelfe vnto men from the houſe toppes as though it were ſomewhat when it is nothing. So the wicked perſecutoſe in the world, which are taken to be mightie and terrible according to the outward ſhew, are of all men moſt contemptible, For Chriſtians doe not once thinke of plucking them vp oſe cutting them downe: they perſecute them not, they reuenge not theiſe owne iniuries, but ſuffer them to encreaſe, to bragge and gloſe as much as they liſt: For they know that they can not abide the violence of a vehement wind. Yea though all thinges be in quietneſſe, yet as graſſe on the houſe toppes by little and little withereth away though the heate of the Sunne, ſo tyrannes vpon ſmall occaſions doe periſh and ſoone vaniſh away. The faithfull theſe foſe in ſuffering doe preuaile and overcome: but the wicked in doing, are overthrown and miſerably periſh, as all the hiſtoſes of all times and ages doe plainly witneſſe.

Verſe. 7. Whereof the mower filleth not hiſ hand, neither the glainer hiſ lap.

Here the holy Ghoſt maketh a comparison betweene graſſe which beareth no fruite, and true coſne which is fruitefull, that theſeby he may the better commend vnto us the ſoſmer ſimilitude

and

and withholde our miſſes from the falſe deade and trefaſſes which
that baſe and counterfet ſhewe bringeth. Fruitefull coſne (ſayth
he) is ſuch, that he which moweth it ſhall fill his hand, and be that
gathereth the ſheaves ſhall haue plenty to carry into his barn.
Here ye ſee, is a truth, and not a baſe ſhewe. But graſſe on the
houſe toppes maketh a ſhew of that which is not true, becauſe it
is fruitles. So the Pope and his Prelates, with other popes
and perſecutors haue a reſemblance and a counterfet ſhewe that
they are the Church. They hold and enioy dignities, Prebendes
benefices, as graſſe hath his ſtalke and eare, but in deede they are
none of the Church, like as graſſe is no coſne: for it withereth a-
way before it can bring forth fruit.

For this is the chiefest argument wherewith they fight againſt
vs, that for this glorious ſhew whereto I ſpake, they abuſe and
challenge to them ſelues the title of the Church. But we are com-
manded to take heed that we be not deceived by outward ſhewes:
Yea and we are admoniſhed alſo that ſuch ſhewes are often times
occasions of great calamities. Beware (ſaith our ſauour Chriſt)
of ſaſe prophets which come to you in ſheepes clothing. Alſo by
their fruites ye ſhall know them. Whereas then they challenge vn-
to them ſelues the name of the church, & for a goodly ſhew (which
the graſſe alſo that groweth on the houſe toppes hath as well as
they), will be counted good coſne: this will not we graunt them.
For if they be good coſne, let them fill the hand of the mower, but
this doe they not. They are unpoſſible graſſe, yea worſe then
graſſe. For in that ſlithines of their wicked luſtes & fleſhly plea-
ſures wherewith they are horribly polluted, & that crueltie which
they exerciſe againſt the true Church, they reſeigne not ſo much as
the outward ſhew which they pretend. Wherefore, ſince there is
nothing to be founde in our aduerſaries but a naked and an hypo-
critical ſhew, and the ſame alſo miſerably and many wayes deſor-
med and deſaced, ſince (I ſay) there is nothing elſe in them but
meere hypocriſie, we iudge & denounce them not to be the Church
of Chriſt, but of Satan. Wherefore they are prepared as chaſſe
and ſtubble to the fire, although vnder a ſhewe and colour of the
Church, they afflict and perſecute vs neuer ſo much.

Verſe. 8. Neither they which goe by, ſay: we bleſſe you in the
name of the Lord.

Thise also commendeth and setteth forth vnto vs the similitude of the grasse. For true coyne hath this commendation, that it is the blessing of God. They therefore which see it growe, doe wish that God would blesse and prosper it. This (sayeth Dauid) shall not be sayd of that grasse, that is to say, of the tyrannes and the aduersaries of the Church, but rather they shall be cursed of all men, yea the malediction both of God and man shall be deaped vpon them. Like as it hath also hapned to the Church of Rome, which before our doctrine and preaching most gloriously flourished. But now that the Gospel hath plucked away her vifour, and sheweth that she is without fruite, all her cursed hypocrisie is betwaped and her memoery is perished from among the godly. Thus the Prophet comforteth the faithfull, and sheweth that the wicked, what glorious bygge and pretence so euer they make, are in deede nothing, and because God blesseth them not, they shall inherite nothing but malediction; and shal be confounded, like as Iudas, the Phariseis, Cheriathus, Arius, and Pelagius, though they seemed so flourishing, most miserably perished, with all their glory.

Therefore let vs, whose doctrine by the grace of God is sound and agreeable with the holy Scripture, remember this similitude, that when we must suffer hatred, slander, reproches and all manner of iniuries for the Gospels sake, we be not aslappd, but may learne hereby to iudge the Pope, the Bishops and wicked Princes with their doymen and executioners of their cruelty, to be nothing else but grasse on the house toppes, which seemeth to be somewhat when in deede it is nothing, and therefore it is without all blessing. To such it shall be sayd with the rich glutton in hell. Sonne remember that thou, in thy life time receuedst thy pleasures. For if we consider the whole history of the church euen from the beginning of the world, we shal see that God hath alwayes (as I haue thought by his secret counsell, that as grasse on the house toppes withereth away before the haruett come: so tyrannes are suddenly cut of and neuer come to their fall chine. Therefore let vs constantly abide and enuote with patience in all afflictions, until the ende doe shew that it was nothing but grasse, and suddenly withered when it was most thick in euuile and floure. The wicked do enioy all good things for the Churches sake, like as the grasse on the house toppes hath the benefite of the rayne and of the Sunne as well as the coyne in the fieldes. But as they shall not liue halfe their

Luke. 16.

their dayes, and as they shall see their owne counsellis and deuises to be but vayne & without successe, so shall they be as a perpetual shame among men: in so much that no man shall wish any good vnto them: As at this day the memorie of Iudas, Pilate, the wicked Jewes Dioclesianus, Maximinus and other tyrants is without honour, yea most execrable and odious vnto all men. This consolation is set forth by the holy Ghost by these grosse similitudes & examples, that we may conceiue in our mindes some shadow or resemblance of Gods workes, since we can not rightly iudge and esteeme the thinges themselves according to the truth, but we iudge the enemies and persecutors of the Church by their goodly shew and outward appearance, to be good wheate, because they prosper and flourish so long vpon the earth: Wherefore we must rest wholly in the worde, which with such similitudes paynteth out these thinges, and we must withhold our senses from all outward sightes and shewes, and iudge no otherwise of the aduersaries of the worde, then of most vile grasse that groweth on the house toppes and is contemned of all men. For so sayeth the spirite and sapient: but our senses say otherwise.

In like manner must we doe also in spirituall tentations, when our conscience accuseth vs & giueth testimony against vs, as well in the agony and daunger of death, as in other conflicts: Here if we follow that which appeareth to reason and our owne senses to be true, it shall seeme vnto vs that our enemies are inuincible and almightie, and that there is no remedy, but we must needes be overcome and utterly perish. The sight & feeling of this greatness perteyneth to the eyes and to the senses onely, and ryseth of the iudgement of reason, and not of the truth. But when we looke to the true greatness which the word setteth forth vnto vs, we are constrained to say that death, sinne, Satan, and the very gates of hell are in deede nothing else but grasse on the house tops, but stubble, but a very bubble swimming vpon the water, which with the least occasion breaketh and vanisheth away. So must these thinges be amplified and set against all kindes of tentations, whether they be persecutors of the word, as the world and wicked princes, or else sinne, death and Satan. At which we must heerne to extenuate and lessen as much as we can, because Christ liueth and we haue his word. The consolation is able to swallow vp all terrors, and maketh vs able to say, that all these thinges are in very deede but one.

nothing. But when we consider these things without the word
and Christ in respect of our selves and of our own strength, then
are they in deede, not grasse, but such the high and mighty moun-
taines as can not be passed ouer. Wherefore, when we fight a-
gainst our enemies, we must fight, not as men consisting of body
and soule, but as Christians baptised in the name of Christ, ha-
uing the gifte of the spirit and the word. Now therefore, when the
Devill, death, hell, the selfe, the world and euell Princes are compa-
red to a Christian, they are but grasse upon the house toppes, or if
any thing can be sayd to be more vile and contemptible. For he
hath the word which is almighty, and moreouer he hath Christ
him selfe. Christians therefore are invincible, yea even then when
they are overcome & troden vnder foote. For the power of Christ
is made perfect through weakenes. Thus did the holy Prophets
and Martyrs comfort them selves against the world and the king-
dom of Satan, and therefore they did so valiantly suffer all kindes
of afflictions; being perswaded, not that the grasse, which wither-
eth away of it selfe without mans endeuour, but the word of God
should haue the victorie. For true it is that Basilus writeth when
he comforteth the people of Alexandria against the fury of Arius,
that though the persecutions of the enemies, the Church doth
more and more encrease and multiply. Which thing we also haue
proued, and God graunt that we and our posteritie may still so doe.

2. Cor. 12. 9.

The 130. Psalme.

Out of the depth I call vnto thee, O Lorde, &c.

The argu-
ment of this
Psalme:
which emon-
gest all the
Psalmes is
one of the
chiefest.

This Psalme we doe also account emongest the most excellent
& principall psalmes: for it setteth forth the chiefest poynt of our
saluation, our iustification I meane, & righteousness before God.
The true and sincere knowledge whereof is it which mainteyneth
and preferreth the Church: for it is the knowledge of veritie and
life. Contrariwise, where the knowledge of our iustification is
lost, there is no life, no Church, no Christ, neither is there any
iudgement lest either of doctrine or of spirites, but all is full of
horrible darkenes and blindness. That we may therefore preserve
and leaue this light to our posteritie, we wil take in hand, as God
shall make vs able, to expound this Psalme also.

And

And here first of all ye haue to note, that the Prophets, when they speak of God or name God, do meane their owne God, whose promises & worship they had amongst them, lest ye should thinke that we haue any accesse vnto God by our owne imaginations which we conceaue of God without the word, as the Turkes, the Iewes and the Papists do, which seke after God altogether without his word, or else they transfoyme the word from the right sense and vnderstanding thereof, into a fantasie of their owne imagination. For the Prophets did know that the true God, although he be of him selfe and of his owne nature infinite and incomprehensible, was included notwithstanding in the Mercies, whereunto he had bound him selfe by his word and promise. Wherefore, although they called him the God of heauen & maker of all things, yet this had they as a more neere & proper token of the true God, that they knewe him to haue his dwelling in Sion. When they prayed therefore vnto God or talked of God, they did it according to that forme and maner whereby God had reueiled him self in his word and promises. Albeit therefore the Prophet maketh no mention in this place of his tabernacle or promises, but cometh to speak vnto God simply and without all respect thereof, yet we must vnderstand that he speaketh no other wise to God, then as he is set forth in his word & worship: Like as we ought now no other wise to thinke or speake of God, then as he is in our true Mercies, as Christ himselfe saith vnto Philip: He that seeth me, seeth my father. No man cometh vnto my father but by me.

How the prophets are wont to speake of God, & how they describe him.

Without Christ God is neither to be sought nor worshipped.

When we haue attained this knowledge, then may we safely worship God and call vpon him as he is the maker of heauen and earth, and so shall we vndoubtedly find him. For although of him selfe and when he is not thus reueiled, he is vnsearchable, and not to be found: yet in his word and promises, wherein he wrapeth him selfe, he will both be found & knowne of them that will there seke after him. The Iewes therefore praying before the arke, worshipped the true God of heauen and earth. For God by his word had promised that he would be there present, & there would beare the prayers of his people. Euen so we likewise looking vnto Christ & worshipping him, doe worship the true God: for he hath reueiled him selfe in Christ. Therefore Christ saith: What so euer ye shall aske the father in my name he will giue it you. They therefore that pray vnto God and fasten not their eyes and minds vpon

Christ, come not into God, but worship the imaginations of their owne hearts in steede of true God, & are plaine idolaters. For neither will god be sought nor found, nor heare our prayers, but in our mercies at Christ. Wherefore if we will find God in deede, knowe him as we should do, & with boldnes come vnto him, let vs loke vnto Christ, according to his saying of S. Iohn: He that seeth me, seeth my father. Thus his word gathereth together his wandring cogitations of our hearts, vnto this only person Christ God & man, to the end we should knowe there is no God can be found no God without Christ. Dost thou not beleue (saith he) that the father is in me, & I in him?

In like maner did the holy Iewes pray vnto God dwelling in Sion: That place who so euer neglected, although they vsed one and the same kind of worship, & the same wordes in prayer which they did, notwithstanding they committed idolatrie, because they did contrary to this commaundement, namely that he would be worshipped in Ierusalem. This is then a general rule to be obserued in all the Psalmes & in the whole Scriptures, that in the olde Testament there was no God but in Sion: or in the place of the tabernacle, and that all prayers were made vnto God sitting betwene the Cherubins. Nowe, when this temple was destroyed, God serd vp an other temple, in the which he would be sought, seru'd and worshipp'd. Without this temple there is no God, but the deuill in steede of God, is there both sought and founde: and therefore men fall either into desperation if they haue an euill conscience, or else through hypocrisie into presumption, as did the Idolatrous Iewes, and as our Papistes now doe, most arrogantly presuming of their owne righteousnes.

Hereunto doe these and such like sentences of the Psalmes & the Prophets appertaine: I lift vp mine eyes vnto the mountaines. Again, The Lord out of Sion bleſſe thee. In like maner are all such other sentences also to be vnderstand wherein is added no manifest signification of the place or of his temple, as in this place: Out of the depth haue I called vnto thee O Lord. He doth not here call the Lord absolutely his maker of heauen & earth, as the Turks also do, but the same God which dwelleth in Sion, whose word & promises they had amongst them, that he would there receaue & heare their prayers. The Prophet resteth therefore wholly & onely in the assured confidence of his free mercy & grace of God, but of that God which was in Sion, & which said vnto Satan: I will put enmitie
betwene

betwene thee and the seede of the woman: For God will not be sought by our deuises. Which if we shoulde doe, what shoulde we need then þ word? To what end was þ law/why was Christ reuelled? Behold our aduersaries the papists wherunto they are come. They pray much. They recite Psalmes often. They say: Pater noster qui es in celis, &c. But because they contemne the worde, yea and persecute it also with might and maine, therefore vnder these good wordes they mainteine plaine idolatrie. So hapneth it also to the Turkes, euen then when they say they worship the liuing God the maker of heauen and earth.

For this cause I do so often admonish you, that without Christ ye should shut your eyes and stoppe your eares, and say ye knowe no God besides him which was in the lappe of the virgine Marie and suckt her breaſtes. Where this God Christ Iesus is, there is God wholly, there is the whole diuinitie, there is þ father and the holy Ghost. Without this Christ there is no God. I haue known many in the kingdom of Antichrist, which seeking to comprehend God by mans speculations, haue horribly perished, and if God through his inestimable mercie had not deliuered me from this temptation, I had also fallen headlong into destruction.

Albeit the Prophet (as I sayd) maketh here no expresse mention of the temple, yet shal ye see how in this psalme he wrapperth the promise concerning Christ. For this is the whole argument of this psalme, that there is no saluation, no grace, no iustification, but in that God which forgiveth sinnes. And is this God any other then the same which sayd vnto the Serpent: The seede of the woman shall bruse thy head? Therefore he taketh God here as a promise maker, and sheweth that Christ was promised of the father to be a sacrifice for the sinnes of the world. And here the Prophet setteth forth vnto vs a principall poynt of doctrine touching Christian righteousness, Christian wisdom and the glory of Christ. These thinges David treateth of euen then, when the law was in his full strength, and leaperth ouer the boundes of the law into Paradise, or rather into the very heauen of grace & mercie. For why shoulde I not call grace heauen it selfe, by the which we haue an open passage vnto heauen, and the which we can neuer attayne vnto by the law, by workes or by our owne endeuour; but rather, as a most large heauen it receaueth vs beleuing that by adoption we are made righteous before God through Christ.

D iii.

The prophet praying for the remission of sinnes, includeth Christ in his prayer.

Whereby we may see what the entent and purpose of the Prophet is in this Psalm, namely to teach vs the true way to righteousness, life and saluation. Againe, to shew vs the way how to escape death, sinne and the wrath of God, that out of this life we may passe to life ouerlasting. And in teaching of these things he sheweth his owne experience, and layeth open vnto vs his owne hart, which the holy Ghost had exercised and schooled with many tentations, that so he might attayne to this doctrine: wherein he goeth about here to instruct vs also. The summe whereof is, that he resteth wholly in the hope of Gods mercie, and in the sure trust of the forgiveness of his sinnes. But these thinges shall moze clearly appeare hereafter in expounding of the Psalm.

Verse. 1. Out of the depth haue I called vnto thee, O Lorde.

The greatness of the temptation wherewith David was oppressed.

It may seeme that the Prophet bleth here moze wordes then needeth. But he that considereth well the cause which forceth him to burst out into these wordes, shall see that no plentie of wordes could expresse the sorrow and anguish of his wooll hart, nor sufficiently declare his daunger. For it was no light or common temptation that vexed him. He complained not of perills that he was in by the rage of Saul, by his sonne Absalon, by false Prophets and others, nor of any other tentations which proceede of malice and hatred wherewith the world persecuteth the goodly: but he setteth forth here the grieve of a vexed and wounded conscience & the very sorowes of death, when a man feeling his hart as it were oppressed with desperation, thinketh him selfe forsaken of God: when he seeth his owne vnworthines and desertes accouled before God as a terrible iudge: yea when it seemeth vnto him that God hath not onely forsaken him, but cast him away for euer, hateth & abhorreth him for his sinnes. These tentations are much moze terrible then those which men commonly fall into: for they are not without daunger of soule & eternall saluation. Therefore he bleth here this maner of speech, saying: Out of the depth I call vnto thee, &c. As if he should say: great are the troubles wherewith I am oppressed. For I feele mine owne sinnes and the iust wrath of God vpon me for the same, neither can I find reliefe or comfort to my restless & afflicted soule. Against the malice of men, wherewith they

they molest and bere vs, there are remedies to be found: but this wound is incurable, except the Lord send helpe and succour from above.

And in vnde such troubles as the godly are commonly exercised withall, as the losse of goods, wife, chldren & such other, may yet be ouercome & borne with patience. For euer, in those which are counted inferiour sinnes, as the offences of youth, the defect & broken herted may moze easily be raised vp againe: But these afflictions seeme to them, and are in deed vntollerable, when they seele them selues oppressed with such horrible and hellish cogitations, that they can see nothing else, but that they are caste away from God for euer. They therefore that seele such bitter tentations, haue here an example that Dauid in him selfe felt and had experience of the like. For it maketh the tentation much moze greuous when they which are thus afflicted, seele that, (as to them it seemeth) which none else doe seele but they alone. We must learne therefore that euen the godly haue euer suffered the same afflictions, and haue bene bearen downe euen to death with the terrours of the law and sinne: as we may see here by the example of Dauid crying euen, as it were out of hell and saying: Out of the depth doe I cry vnto thee, O Lord, &c.

It is a great consolation to see that holy Dauid was exercised with the tentations of the wrath of God.

But it is not inough for vs to knowe that we sustaine not these troubles and tentations alone, but we muste also learne the way whereby such as haue suffered the like tentations, haue bene raised vp againe. And here yee see Dauid what he doth. We see whither he flyeth in his great distresse. He despaireth not, but cryeth vnto the Lord, as one yet hoping assuredly to find reliefe and comforte. Rest thou also in this hope, and do as he did. Dauid was not tempted to the end he should despair. Thinke not thou therefore that thy tentations are sent vnto thee that thou shouldest be swallowed vp with sorowe and desperation. If thou be brought downe euen to the gates of hell, beleue that the Lord will surely raise thee vp againe. If thou be brused and broken, knowe that it is the Lord which will heale thee againe. If thy hart be ful of sorow and heauines, looke for comforte from him who hath saide, that a troubled spirite is a sacrifice vnto him.

In the tentations of sin and of the wrath of god what we ought to do.

It is expedient also to haue some faithfull brother at hande, which may comfort vs in these bitter conflictcs. For God would that in his Church one should help to comfort an other as members.

D. liii.

knitte together in one body: and he hath promised that when two are gathered together in his name, he will be the thirde amongst them. And doubtles nothing comforteth an afflicted conscience so much, as to heare some godly brother declaring out of the word of God, that such terrours and afflictions are sent of God, not to destroy vs, but to humble vs, thereby to make vs to acknowledge the great mercy of God offered vnto vs, and to receiue the same with thankfull harts. But if, in this distresse we be destitute of the helpe of such faithfull brethren, we must then doe as David old in this place: that is, we must cry vnto the Lord, & pray as this Psalm teacheth vs. Wherein ye see such sorrowfull and bitter sighes as liuely expresse in David the great anguish of spirit: from whence floweth such plentiful matter (and yet nothing superfluous) as compelleth him, not onely to say, that out of the deepe depth he crieth and calleth vnto the Lord, but he putteth the Lord also in minde of his promise, thereby to moue him the rather to giue eare vnto his prayer.

Verse. 2. Lord heare my voice: let thine eares attende to the voyce of my prayers.

David in his
tentation
did not thus
pray.

He speaketh (as I haue saide before) to the same God whose seate was in Ierusalem, like as we now speake vnto that God, and call him father whom we knowe and worship in Christ alone. On this God with deepe sighes he calleth, that he would with the eye of mercie looke vpon him and graciously harken vnto his prayer. But if we thinke that we can not pray with such a minde or with such seruencie of spirit as these words doe expresse, we must consider that David him selfe did not thus pray in his anguish and in the extremitie of his tentation. The minde oppressed with terrour and desperation, can not pray so long as such desperate assaults doe endure, but bursteth out rather into blasphemy & murmuring against God, and can not thinke wel or reuerently of God. But when the extremitie of the conflict is past, the beginneth this crying vnto God and this vehement desire, which the mind before oppressed with anguish and sorrowe, could scarcely once feele. It helpeth an afflicted conscience also very much (as I haue saide) to heare some faithfull brother with comfortable exhortation & counsel out of the word of God, saying on this wise: Brother, why are thou

thou so heauy harted? Doeſt thou not heare that God will not the death of a ſinner? haſt thou forgotten that God commaundeth thee to beleue in him, to truſt in him? Looke vpon the firſt commaundement: What is it, what requireth it elſe; but that we ſhoulde worſhip God in faith and hope? Why then ſhouldeſt thou not truſt in his goodnes and mercie? Why ſhouldeſt thou deſpaire? This is to heape ſinne vpon ſinne: and whereas thou waſt a ſinner beſoze in the ſecond table and in the inferior degre of the commaundements of God, now thou ſetteſt thy ſelfe in the firſt table alſo, and in the higheſt degre, adding to thy other ſinnes, deſperation and incredulitie, &c. When the heauy and troubled conſcience is thus earnestly ſtirred vp to a ſtedfaſt hope and truſt in God, and to the conſideration of Gods great mercie and goodnes towardes the penitent and afflicted, then beginneth to ariſe ſome ſparke of faith and groning of the harte, burſting out into theſe or the like wordes: Oh that I could. Theſe vnſpeakeable gronings the ſpirit helpeth, and at the length there followeth ſome feeling of reſeſe & comfort. For God can not reſect or neglect theſe gronings. Of theſe gronings we ſee a ſhadowe, as it were, in the firſt verſes. But why doeſt thou grone? why art thou heauie? Harken what followeth.

Singular conſolations againſt deſperation.

Verſe. 3. If thou Lorde wilt ſtreitly marke what is done amiſſe,
O Lord who may abide it?

This verſe in our diuinitie is well knowne, neither doe I ſee how either our aduerſaries, or Satan him ſelfe can auoyde it. For what can they ſay? or what haue we here that may moue vs any way to doubt? As for David, it is witneſſed of him that he was a man after Gods owne hart: and in deepe he is a ſingular example to all poſteritie in all kind of goodlines. For although, through the murder of Vrias and his adultery with Barſabe he is not without reprob, yet how great was his humilitie when the Prophete reproboued him, and how ſeruient was his faith when he rayſed him ſe againe? Beholde mozeouer his ſingular patience in affliction, his carefull and continuall trauell for the amplifying and aduancing of the kingdome of God, of the true ſeruice and worſhip of God. What ſhould I ſay moze? David hath not many fellows, whether ye conſider his life and his faith, or the witneſſe pronoun-

David prayeth that his ſinnes may be forgiven and his iniquities not marked, therefore he denyeth all righteouſnes of workes before God.

red of him by the Lorde him selfe: and yet he notwithstanding so excellent and so holy a man is compelles plainely to confesse his imperfection, saying: If thou Lorde wilt straitly marke what is done amisse, O Lord, who may abide it? Is not this then absolutely to deny all the righteousness, purities & holines of men, what so euer they be? Likewise in the 31. Psalm thus he speaketh euen of those whom he calleth godly and holy: For this shal euery one that is godly pray vnto thee, that is, for pardon and forgiveness of their sinnes. Where are they then that so highly extoll the righteousness of woorkes, seeing that Dauid him selfe in the sight of God simply renounceth and reiecteth his woorkes and all manner of righteousness, and onely desireth that the Lorde would not straitly marke his iniquities.

But in deede our aduersaries talke now somewhat moze moderately in this matter then heretofore they haue done. For they doe not now deny that faith iustificieth, but yet they say that that faith which iustificieth must be furnished with charitie. Thus like pies & parrets they chatter and prate that they them selues doe not vnderstand. But furnish faith how so euer ye list, yet is this a general sentence: If thou Lord, wilt straitly mark what is done amisse, O Lord, who, who may abide it? Surely no man liuing. For if any man had bene able to abide it, then Dauid, no doubt, had bene able, being so holy a man, so perfect in the word of the Lorde, so often and so many wayes exercised and tryed with afflictions, to confirme and stablish him in faith and in the feare of the Lorde. For I doe not thinke that amongst all the Papistes there is any one so impudent, that will not thinke him selfe farre inferiour to Dauid: and yet Dauid saith, that righteousness commeth not by woorkes. For, sayth he: If thou wilt marke what is done amisse, no man shall bee able to abide it, or to stande in thy sight, O Lorde.

Wherefore let no man trust that by his owne merites or righteousness he shall be able to stande against the terror of death and the iudgement of God. Neither doe I suppose that amongst our aduersaries there is any such as dare presume to enter into the iudgement of God trusting vpon his owne righteousness: and yet they teach, commaund and exhort other so to doe. But we teach a contrary doctrine, leading the Church from this false trust, to a trust and confidence in the merite and death of Christ, and for this cause.

The Papistes
teach that
which they
them selues
doe not.

cause they condemne vs as heretikes. Is not this extreme malice? They will not doe them selues that they teach other to doe. For when death cometh, they dare not trust to their owne merits, and yet will they force other so to doe, or most cruelly condemne them for heretikes. Thus we are taught by the experience of all such as are not betterly boyd of vnderstanding, that no man liuing, ouercommeth by his owne workes or righteousness in Gods sight: and yet the whole nature of man, when it is not vnder tentation, still looketh vnto workes and seeketh meanes how it may by them please God. But here is set forth vnto vs a simple and a plaine doctrine: If thou Lord will marke what is done amisse, none shall be able to abide it: Who would then desire to enter into iudgement, that he may be overcome, condemned & cast away for ever.

This is therefore the summe and effect of all together, that we all (Dauid, Peter, Paule, &c.) were boyne, that we are, that we liue and we die sinners. But this is our gloze, our health and safetie, that when by the Gospel we be instructed of the mercie of God and merite of Christ, we leape over the boundes of the lawe and out of our owne workes, as it were into an other world, and into a newe light, and comming vnto God with boldnes, we say: O Lord, we can not contend with thee in iudgement, we can not dispute with thee as touching our righteousness or vnrightheousnes: but if thou wilt marke our iniquities, if thou in iudgement wilt demaunde whether we be righteous, then must we needes perish. Wherefore we appeale from thy iudgement, vnto the throne of thy mercie. If we haue done any thing well, it was thy free gift alone. Looke vpon vs therefore with the eyes of thy mercie, and not with the eyes of the iustice of thy iudgement: For if thou doe not pardon our iniquities, and close thine eyes that thou behold them not, we shall not be saued, &c.

This light of doctrine we see that Dauid followed euen in the darkenes of the lawe. But our case is now much better, for as much as we see these thinges clearly sette before our eyes in the newe Testament. For what teach we else at this day, but that we are saued by faith alone in the death and blood of Christ? that by the merite of Christ onely, our finnes are couered and taken away, according to that saying: Blessed are they whose finnes are forgiven. Forgouenes of finnes then is that heauen vnder the which we dwell through our trust and confidence in the merite of

We must rest onely & wholly vpon the trust and confidence of the mercy of God.

By Christ alone we obteyne remission of finnes. Therefore onely faith where by Christ is apprehended, iustificth vs.

Christ. For he that beleueth, shall not be condemned, but shall passe from death to eternall life. Dauid addeth here no expresse mention of Christ, and yet because he hopeth for mercie, therefore he loketh straight to this mercie seat that afterwards should more clearly be reueiled in the new Testament. For ye see that he signifieth no lesse, but if God should marke his iniquities, he must needes dispaye. For without remission of sinnes or knowledge of grace, what haue we to rest vppon? What safetie may we finde? They therefore that put not their trust herein alone, that by the death of Christ their sinnes are taken away, and Gods eyes closed that he will not see their sinnes, must needes perish. For this onely do the Scriptures set forth, that our life resteth wholy and alone, ly in the remission of sinnes, and in that the Lord will not see our sinnes, but in mercie couereth them, and will not remiember them or lay them to our charge: So that we must acknowledge & confesse that we know nothing but the righteousnes of Christ: Not that we should not now worke and bring forth the fruites of a holy life: not that there is no sinne in vs, or that God doth not hate the same: but because God sayeth and promisseth that he will not marke our transgressions, because we beleue in Christ and put our trust in him. This shield whosoener holdeth out for his defence, and hideth him selfe vnder it, them God accepteth as his chyldren, because they haue a Sauour: but they that haue not, are giuen to despaire. For what can all their workes, their merites, their righteousnes doe, seeing Dauid sayth: If thou marke our iniquities, O Lorde, who shall be able to stand in thy sight? In this verse therefore consisteth altogether, which hereafter followeth.

Verse. 4. But mercy is with thee, that thou mayst be feared.

Propitiation
or mercie
what it is.

This mercie thou shalt not find in Moyses, in the lawe or in the workes of the law, not in Monkery, not in a strait and painful life, not in almes deedes, &c. Briefly, this mercie thou shalt finde no where, because it is no where, but with the Lord. Mercie therefore is not our merite or our righteousnes, but it is the free pardon of our sinnes by Christ alone. Which mercy, although thou shouldst afflict and punish thy selfe in a Monastery a thousand yeares, or doe neuer so many, so perfect or so holy workes, thou shalt neuer find, as the conscience which euen in a most streit and holy life

feeleth.

feelleth desperation, doth sufficiently witnesse. But herein alone the conscience findeth rest and comfort, when altogether naked & without any addition of her owne worthynesse, it committeth it self to the naked and bare mercie of God, and saith: O Lord, I haue thy promise that righteousness commeth of mercie alone, whiche righteousness is nothing else but thy free pardon, that is to saie, that thou wilt not marke our iniquities.

I commend therefore vnto you this definition of righteousness which David here setteth forth, that to marke sinne, is to condēne. To marke iniquities what it is. Again, not to marke sinne, is to iustifie or pronounce a man righteous. True righteousness what it is. And this is true righteousness in deede, when sinnes are not marked, but pardoned & not imputed. Likewise in an other place also he defineth a blessed man: and Paule allegeth the same definition very apely: Blessed is the man (saith he) to whom God imputeth not his sinne. He saith not: blessed is the man which hath no sinne, but vnto whom the Lord doth not impute that sinne which he hath, as here also he saith: When sinnes are not marked. These testimonies must be diligently collected and noted, that we may see how that this doctrine is founded vpon the holy Scriptures, and that all the confidence and trust that man can haue in the righteousness of works or of the law, is utterly cut of in the iudgement of God.

For this doctrine maketh all men alike, and before God leaueth no difference. For if by imputation onely we be righteous, it followeth that not onely we be all sinners, but that also there is no difference betwene the learned & vnlearned, the wise and the simple, the married and unmarried, the Prince and the plowman, &c. For this difference of degrees in the iudgement of God auayleth nothing: but this onely auaieth before God, that our sinnes bee forgiven. Wherefore if this doctrine had bene heretofore diligently taught, all Monkry & such other monstrous kinds of life had not bene brought into the Church, which the foolish people hath beleued to be more holy then others. For what soeuer kinde of life a man be in, this is the condition of vs all, that we haue neede of forgiveness of sinnes, as Paule teacheth in the Actes, where he sheweth that God suffered the manners of our fathers, like as a good husband suffereth and beareth with the manners of his wife, the maister of his scholers, the Prince of his subiects. Now, if this euill life haue neede of such discretion and moderation, that men

The doctrine of iustification maketh all men alike

Act. 13.

shoulde not be alwayes extreme and rigorous in dealing one towards another, how much more neede haue we, that God shoulde beare with vs in this our great weakenes and corruption? If God shoulde deale sharply with vs, then shoulde our transgressions daily and continually moue him to marke straitly, and sharply to punish vs. But he will not marke our iniquities. This he requireth, that we beleue in Christ. Then will he beare with vs, then will he wink at our weakenes, and pardon our transgressions, yea in respect of our faith in Christ, he will accept vs as righteous.

Whē we be
holde our
sines, we
must looke
vnto the
Mercieseat.

Thus Dauid turned him selfe from desperation, to an assured hope and trust in Gods mercie. For when we looke to our sinnes, it can not be but we must needes be vexed and fall to desperation. But we must not fasten our eyes vpon our sinnes onely, but must looke vnto the mercieseat: So that, albeit we can not deny but that we are sinners, yet the remission of sinnes we may not deny. And why is the remission of sinnes promised, if sinners may not enioy the same? Moreover, in that Dauid speaketh of mercie, he confesseth that he is a sinner, and that mercie dooth properly pertaine vnto him. But thou wilt say: Sinnes make a man unworthy to receaue mercie at Gods handes: therefore let Dauid, Paule and Peter hope for mercie, as they which are holy and worthy to receaue mercie, &c. Such cogitations slye then suen as a present payson and destruction of thy soule, and thinke rather on this wise: Because I am a sinner, therefore remission of sinnes pertaineth vnto me. Wherefore I will not despair, I will not suffer my selfe to be swallowed vpp with heauynes: but I will turne vnto the Lord, who hath promised mercie, who also hath commaunded that I should trust and beleue in him.

Thus Dauid setteth forth in this verse the summe and effect of all true Christian doctrine, & that sunne which giueth light vnto the Church. For whiles this doctrine standeth, the Church shall stand and flourish. But when this doctrine faileth, the Church must needes faile and fall to ruine. This doctrine I doe so often and so diligently repeate, for that Satan desireth and seeketh nothing so much as to plucke the knowledge thereof out of all mens hartes. And this is the speciall cause of all the troubles which he stirreth vp either publickly or priuately. We see what mischief he hath brought into the Church by Schismes and factions, not onely

swely in that men contending and struing for newe matters haue almost forgotten this article: but many also offended throught dissensions and discorde, beginne now to loth and contemne the same. It is therefore the part of a faithfull pastor not to suffer him selfe by such offences to be remoued from this article: but with an inuincible constancie and continual trauell to set forth and aduance the same. Whereouer, both often cometh it to passe, that in those also which are cast downe with the beholding and consideration of the law and their owne sinnes, this article of the forgiveness of sinnes, is either lost or else in great daunger. David therefore in this Psalm setteth forth (as hereafter we shall heare) not onely his owne experience, but also exhortations and promises, whereby it may appeare that he carefully traueled for the preservation of this doctrine. And in deede the greatnes of the daunger ought to stirre vp a carefull diligence in this behalfe, and daily to encrease the same in vs. For where this doctrine is lost, the mind is overwhelmed with all kindes of tentations.

So when in the Papacie this article was lost, what was so monstrous, that was not gladly heard and receiued of all men? The impudencie of the Ponkes & all the religious rable was so great, that (I am ashamed to speak it) there was not, in a maner so much as the cracke of their foule panth, but they would haue men to reuerence it. But contrariwise, where this knowledge is receyved and this doctrine preached, all heresies may easily be overthrowen. And hereof the Papacie is a notable example, which by the preaching and publishing of this one point of doctrine is now vanquished and banished out of mens hartes. For although you reppone the life of the Papistes and speake against their whoredom, concoulines, pyanny and such like enormities neuer so much, and by the euill woorkes of the law detect their impietie, yet shall you nothing preuaile: For all this the Pope doth not sticke to confesse, as in deede he can neuer deny his manifest abominations. But sayth he, although our life be defiled with sinne, yet our doctrine and our kingdome notwithstanding is holy.

In like maner the deuill, in the lawe and woorkes can not be conuicted. For he can therein so handle him selfe, that he will easily bryeake out, as it were through a spyders webbe, and lose nothing of all his power. But then is he overcome in deede, when the doctrine of sayth is diligently and truly taught, and

The only doctrine of iustification overthroweth the Papacie. The woorkes of the lawe are euill which any part of saluation or iustification is ascribed vnto them.

Howe the
Pope & Sa-
tan are put
to flight.

that the Papistes haue not onely lost, but also haue defaced with their filthy doctrine and opinions, both Christ and the true manner of iustification. If we sticke to this ankerhold, both the Pope and Satan shall be put to flight. For if their doctrine be once conuicted as false and erroneous, they haue nothing to defende themselves withall. Wherefore, endeavour your selues with all diligence, that this doctrine may be of you both well knowne & surely stablished in your hearts. And let none be so arrogant as to think, that he hath attayned the full & perfect knowledge of this heavenly wisdom. For so long as Satan, the world and our owne reason can do any thing, we shall neuer be perfect in this knowledge: And because we are as it were souldiers placed in the forefront of the battaile, therefore we are in daunger of many perills: which to withstand, it is not in the power of wisdom of man.

God dealeth
not with vs
according to
the law: There-
fore we may
not deale
with God
according to
the law.

The summe and effect therefore of all these wordes: Because there is mercie with thee, is this, that God will not deale with vs according to the law, because we likewise should not deale with him according to the law, but say with the Publicane: Lord be mercifull vnto me a sinner. They that goe beyond these boundes of grace, and leauing this rich and ample grace, wil dispute of the law and works, calling to account what they haue done and what they haue left vndone, the further they go, the deeper they plunge them selues in hell. I say not this without good cause. I see what hapned to good Bernard, whom if you examine wel, you shall find him contrary to him selfe. For when he treateth of faith with an inward feeling, he teacheth Christ purely, he stirreth vpp mens hartes to the loue of Christ effectually, and setteth forth his benefites sincerely, then smelleth he of nothing else but roses and hony. But contrariwise, when he disputeth out of the law or of the lawe, then reasoneth he no otherwise, then if he were some Turke or Jewe, which either knoweth not Christ, or plainly deniect him. So is it likewise with all others that take vpon them the office of teaching and preaching: For when they speake with an inward feeling and practise, and are not caried away with disputations & contentions, they teach Christ purely. But when they enter into the discourse of the law, they so dispute as if there were no Christ which had instituted the law, yea, which with his owne blood had purchased the remission of sinnes. This doe we also find to be most true when we salu matters of the law & mens traditions, Where-

fore

For we must stand fast in this Paradise of heauen of grace: and seeke no further, that we may remaine in this simple confession of David: VVilt thoue here is mercie.

But why doth he adde mozeouer: That thou mayest be feared? For why to set forth vnto vs what they are against whome he fighteth, and to giue a further light to the former sentence by setting forth the contrary: As if he should say: I haue learned by experience O Lord, why there is mercie with thee, & why of right thou mayst challenge this title vnto thy selfe, that thou art mercifull and forgiveness sinnes. For in that thou shuttest all vnder mercy, and leauest nothing to the merites and workes of men, therefore thou art feared. But if all things were not shut vp vnder thy mercy, or that we could take away sinnes by our owne power, no man would feare thee, but the whole world would proudly contemne thee. For daily experience doth witness, that wheresoeuer this knowledge of the free mercie of God is not, there men walke in the presumption of their owne merites.

Behold the religious man, but especially the *Pharisee* (which kind of men I haue alwayes abhorred aboue others for their intolerable pride): He because he hath a rule and a law wherunto he must frame his life, liueth without all true feares of God, & walke in great securitie. Very fewe there be which come to the true knowledge of sinne, or haue any feeling of desperation. For they that feeble desperation, are glad to heare, that there is mercie with the Lord. But these men doe persecute this doctrine of mercy, free grace, and forgiveness of sinnes, with fire and sword. For the nature of the law is this, that it maketh men proud, presumptuous and contemners of grace, as Paule notably setteth forth in the *Iewes*, Rom. 2. Thou art called a Jewe and rekest in the lawe, and gloriest in God, &c. They that are such are not moued with the authoritie of the Apostles, nor with the miracles of Christ raising by the dead to life, but are as insensible as stones. For in this securitie they are not only ignorant what this propitiation and this mercie is, but also they persecute the same. And therefore to commit a double sinne, moze greivous then the *Pharisees*: vnto our Saviour Christ sayth well of them: Harlots and Publicanes shall enter before you into the kingdom of heauen. For they are easily perswaded, that they are sinners, and that they haue need of the free mercie of God & forgiveness of sinnes. But contrariwise,

Hypocrites do not feare but presume: but we are iustified freely, that we should not presume, but feare.

Annas, Caiphas & other Pharisees, who they heare these things, doe laugh and gibe thereat; & can not abide to be taught of any.

Now for as much as pertaineth vnto them both, the Law hath decreed, that righteousness should not be esteemed according to our workes, but simply according to mercie & the remission of sinnes.

Righteous-
nes is
of grace only

For if righteousness should come of workes or of the law, then either desperation must needs follow, if the law be not perfectly obserued, or else presumption if it be obserued. In desperation there is greater feare then should be: in presumption there is no feare at all. Therefore the meane betwene them both is this, that God

God taketh
not away the
lawe, and yet
the law auai-
leth nothing
to righte-
ousnes.

shuttesth vp al vnder mercy. Notwithstanding he taketh not away the law: For without the law this life can not continue. In what a miserable state should the common wealth be, if murders, adulteries and robberies should be committed & permitted without punishment or execution of law? Whereouer, the workes and exercises of the godly must be guided & ordered by the word of God. For this purpose God will haue the law to continue, and accounteth it for onely obedience in those that doe beleue. But as touching sinne, he commaundeth that we should cast away all trust and confidence in the law, and put our trust onely in the mercie of God set forth vnto vs in Christ Iesus crucified for our sinnes. By this meanes presumption is taken away and feare remaineth: not such a feare as is in the desperate, but such as we see in good and well nurtered children towards their parents. No Donke therefore shall be saued because of his order or strait life. It likewise shall not be saued because it preacheth Christ with carefull diligence & faithfull endeavour. The Prince is not saued because he faithfully governeth and defendeth his subiects. But as touching the Donke, you may easily proue this to be true. For that kind of life is altogether contrary to the word of God. But to teach and instruct the Churches, to gouerne the common wealth, are in deede most holy and excellent workes, and yet are they the workes of the law, which of them selues bring either desperation or presumption. Wherefore, though these workes be neuer so perfect and holy, yet is there no saluation but in this alone, that there is mercie with the Lord, that he may be feared.

To trust in
workes, is to
lose God, &
to shut out
feare.

Wherefore God hath iustly shut vp al vnder sinne, that he may haue mercie vpon all. For if you leaue any thing to the nature of man, whereby he may deserue the sauaour of God, no man will feare

we worship God: but all men will come vnto God as the Monke doe with their abstinence, prayer, obedience and such like. But by this meanes God is lost, and the will of mans hart is worshipped in steede of God. For whiles the Monke thinketh to please God with his hempten girdle & (where with he ought rather to be hanged by upon a tree, then girded): whiles he thinketh, by the obseruation of other traditions to please God, doth he not depart from the true God, & set his owne imaginations in the steede of God, whiles he is perswaded that God thinketh so same that he imagineth? Of the righteousness of the lawe therefore followeth plaine idolatrie, which imagineth a strange God, and loseth the true God. For the true God is propitiation and mercie through Christ. But such as gloze in their works, would make their works propitiatory and auailable to deserue grace. Wherefore God reiecteth all works, and setteth forth his naked and bare mercie, that he may be feared, and not contemned of the presumptuous, hereby taking away all cause of presumption.

The Monke thinketh that his hempten girdle pleaseth God.

God is not feared where true righteousness is not beloned.

Let vs learne then out of this verse of this general proposition, that when the doctrine of the remission of sinnes, of grace of propitiation is lost, it followeth that in steede thereof Idolatrie must needs reigne. For take away grace & the feare of God also, as the prophet saith, must needs followe. And what is it else to feare God, but to reuerence & to worship God? also to acknowledge he is full of mercie & goodnes, & therefore to obey him? This God did I lose when I was a Monke and walked in the confidence of mine owne righteousness. For by experience I am able to proue, that of the most perfect righteousness of the law, there can nothing else followe, but either desperation, which is more seldom, or presumption, which is more common. For the nature of man and the dyuill can not beware, but they must needs presume.

Thou wilt say then: Shall we not keep the law? Shall we not doe good works? yea verily we are bound to doe them. For God therefore hath a church in the world, therefore hath he ordained common wealths, societies & families, that in no place there should be wanting occasion of wel doing. But who is he, that when he hath done these things to the uttermost of his power, seeth not how much impurity & uncleannes remaineth, especially if he should bring his works forth into the sight & presence of God. Wherefore our redemption consisteth wholly and alonely in the merite of God, whiche we.

What the vse of the law is if it doe not iustifie.

apprehend by faith in Christ. And we which through woakes are vnpofforable seruantes, though grace which is giuen by Iesus Christ, are made children, Ioh. 1. So the true feare, true worship, true reuerence, yea and the true knowledge of God resteth onely in mercie, in that we assuredly trust that God through Christ is mercifull vnto vs. To this seruice of God, desperation and presumption are moze contrary, then fire and water. But because the law bringeth either desperation or presumption, therefore it followeth that by the law there is neither righteousnes nor true worship of God. Notwithstanding the law contained in the commandements must be kept. For he that ruleth, must rule with diligence, and he that is a subiect must obey. There is amongst men a difference of degrees and persons. Notwithstanding all do owe a reuerence and obedience vnto God, and with faithfull diligence must doe what in them lyeth. But because these are woakes of the law, we are by them no better then seruantes, and for them we receiue a reward of promise & covenant. But by grace we are made children & heires of the kingdom. The woakes then that follow, do not make vs heires and children, but are doone of heires and children, as a witnes of thanks giuing and obedience.

Grace maketh vs children: but woakes make vs seruantes.

The consequences or sequels which follow vpon the doctrine set forth in this Psalm.

Wherefore I commend vnto you these consequences, that where no mercie is, there is no God: Also, where no God is, there is no mercie. Likewise, where is no mercie, there is no feare or worship of God: Yea there remaineth nothing but idolatrie and the righteousnes of woakes. These things, whilles the law and nature doe rule and reigne, can not otherwise be. Therefore all poperie, all Paphomatisme, Iudaisme and Monkery, with such like, what so euer, which doth not know and vnderstand this propitiation & this mercie, is nothing before God but plaine Idolatrie, albeit in them it seemeth neuer so glorious. For without the mercie there can be no feare of God, but mere presumption.

Christian doctrine therefore doth not deny good woakes, as our aduersaries falsly and maliciously report of vs: but it teacheth that God will not straitly marke our iniquities, but this he requireth, that we beleue, and trust in his mercie, because there is mercie with him that he may be feared and continue our God. Who so euer then doe beleue that God is mercifull and forgiveth sinnes for Christs sake, doe peelde a reasonable seruice vnto God, they strive not with God about the law, woakes and righteousnes, but casting

nothing at all trust and confidence in them selves, do feare him because of his mercie, and so are made children, which doe receive the holy Ghost and beginne to doe the lawe. Of this doctrine the practises and exhortations doe now follow.

Verse. 5. I waite on the Lord: my soule waiteth and I put my trust in his word.

Here is plenty of words, and yet nothing superfluous: for they helpe to amplifie and set forth the matter more lively. First he setteth forth him selfe in this psalme for an example of that doctrine which he desireth to be preserved and reteyned in the Church, and he prayeth that he may be heard. After this, obteyning mercie, he persevereth that he was heard. Nowe therefore he addeth moreouer an exhortation, whereby he stirreth up him selfe constantly to perseuere in this knowledge of grace, and not to suffer him selfe by any meanes to be ledde away from the same. As if he sayd: I know that there is mercie with the Lord. This principall article I haue in some part now learned, and some experience I haue had thereof in my selfe. Now this remaineth for me to doe, even to waite upon the Lord (that is, to trust in the Lord), & constantly to continue in this knowledge, that I may find comfort & consolation in that mercie, which by experience I haue proued to be with the Lord, and that I may hold fast this hope of mercie for euer.

To waite on the Lord, is to trust in the Lord.

The Prophet sheweth moreouer in this place, how easily men are caried away from this knowledge, to contentions and disputations, either publikely or priuately. When we tooke vpon vs the defence of true and sincere doctrine, and were in a goodly forwardnes thereof, at the first we were much troubled with seditious persons, with Anabaptistes and other sectaries. With these spirits whyles we contended, our former exercise and diligence in setting forth this doctrine was almost forgotten. For the truth is not lost by teaching, but by disputing and contending. And this euil cometh by disputations and contentions, that the mindes of men are thereby as it were profaned, and being caried away with the heat thereof, they neglect those thinges which most of all they ought to regard. So Eue in Paradise, as long as she stood to the commandment of God, endured constantly. But when she was mo-

The mindes of men are easily caried away from this knowledge of grace by disputations & contentions.

This inconuenience our posteritie is also like to feele.

ued by the Serpent to reason and doubt of the counsel of God concerning the forbidden fruite, he was ledde away from the word and fell from God. For euer, Satan knoweth that the gates of hell are not able to ouerthrow this doctrine: Therefore he labourerh by subtilie and indirect meanes to bying that to passe, which directly and plainly he dare not attempt. He stirreth by troubles and contentions in the Church, which when with godly zeale we goe about to repressle, he wappeth vs also in troubles before we beware, and by this and like he leadeth vs from the care and consideration of this doctrine. We must fight against heresies and heretikes (I graunt): but yet so, that we be not wholly occupied therein, and so forget or neglect this doctrine. This danger Dauid expresseth in setting forth his owne example so effectually. As if he sayd: It is a hard matter to abide & obfastly in this doctrine. This shall be therefore my onely care and endeavour, euen to wait vpon the Lord, and to beware that this doctrine be not taken from me by any meanes.

Our waiting
& our hope
must rest on-
ly vpon the
worde of
grace.
From the writ-
ten & external
word we
may not de-
part.

Where he sayth: My soule waiteth, it is a proper speech of the Hebrewes, and is as much to say, as with my whole hearte I wayte or will wayte vpon the Lord: for it is an amplification of the former wordes. He sayth not onely that he will wayte on the Lord, but he addeth moreouer: with my whole hart I will wayte, to signifie the vehement desire he hath, that this doctrine might be preserved and mainteyned. But this specially is to be marked which followeth: I put my trust in his word. The Jewes, the Pope and other heretikes say, that they also doe trust. But they leaue the worde and followe their owne imaginations. This may be called trust, but in deede it is nothing: for we may not depart from the vocall worde. For if we so doe, what certieintie can we haue of God, especially seeing that God hath giuen his worde, orspred Ministers of his worde, Magistrates, Parents, &c. to this ende that we should followe their voyce speaking to vs out of his holy worde, and commanding vs to obey their authoritie?

The prophet signifieth here also an other temptation, which all they doe fall into that are not diligent in holding fast this knowledge of mercie. For this Satan seeketh and busily goeth about, either publikely to take away the word, or priuately to hinder this hope in those that haue the word. So the Pope had the word and

Sacra-

Sacramentes, and yet notwithstanding he suffered him selfe to be ledde a way to pilgrimages, rules, vowes, superstition, idolatrie, &c. What trouble we haue had with sectes, we haue before declared. And who is able to recite the tentations wherewith men are pynately assailed & tempted to depart from the word, to straunge opinions which reason deuileth and imagineth. So great a matter is it to auoyde these subtille sleightes of Satan. Dauid sayth therefore: I will not suffer my selfe to be ledde from the word, but in the word I will trust for remission of sinnes, and wil not frame my faith after mine own imaginations, but after the word. There is then a double tentation, against the which the Prophete by his owne example, armeth vs. The first taketh hold of those which do imagine vnto them selues a faith, and take away the word, as the prophane and goodles spirits doe. The seconde followeth those which haue the word and lay no holde on it, but are ledde away to idolatries, and such are the Papistes. But there is yet a third tentation, which is the worst of all, against the which Dauid speaketh as followeth.

The first
tentation.

The second
tentation.

Verse 6. My soule wayreth on the Lorde from the morninge watch, euen vnto night.

When Satan cannot ppeuaile by plaine and direct meanes in tempting vs to forsake the word and followe our owne imaginations, as the heretikes doe: or retaining the word to turne to Idolatrie, as the Papistes doe: then he goeth aboute to make vs weary of all together and vterly to giue ouer. Wherefore, we must not onely haue a good courage that we may obtaine the victorie, but we must also continually withstand his force, endure his assaults, & neuer suffer our selues to be overcome by his impotuntie. For oftentimes we see that by long continuance they are overcome, whom no troubles, were they neuer so great, could overcome. And in warfare we see, that nothing is so much commended as to presse still vpon the enemy. So the Turke, although he hath had many ouerthrowes, yet because he still goeth on and neuer giueth ouer, therefore he ppeuaileth. In this continuance, diligence & trauel, at which we must constantly perseuere, which wil hold this doctrine of iustification & righteousness. And here Dauid setteth forth his owne example, that like as the enemy hath his continuall assaults and

The third
tentation.

VVe must
not be wee-
ried or dis-
couraged
through the
impotuntie
& continu-
all assaults
of the enemy.

Satan is a
continuall e-
nemie, and
neuer cea-
seth to as-
saile vs.

neuer giueth ouer: so he also neuer ceaseth to waite vpon the Lorde
to trust in the Lord, that not only is a strong & a valiant, but also
so with a constant faith & invincible hope, he may gaine victory.
Wherefore we must learne by the policie of our enemye to play
the good souldiers. For he is neuer weery in deuising and practi-
sing all the meanes possible, whereby he may trouble and molest
the Church. So at the first the ende of one heresie was the begin-
ning of an other, and one persecution followed an other. We also
at the beginning had many conflicts with the Pope and his mon-
sters. When they were repressed, by and by new errors ensued,
which notwithstanding did not then first begin to spring vpp, but
the olde enemye (who, as he is neuer weery, so lacketh he no subtil-
tie and policie to doe mischief) rayped by agayne such errors and
heresies as had beene conuicted and confounded long agoe, to the
end that the poore afflicted church might haue no breathing time.
For we see what swarmes of Epicures be now euery where: And
there is no small number also of such as seeke to reuiue the heresie
of Arius. This continual diligence and impoyntitie of the enemye
it behoueth vs to know, that we fall not into security. For it is not
enough to haue once overcome, but one battaile followeth an o-
ther, and one victory an other.

This earnest and continuall trauell of the enemye, we doe not
onely see in the stoy of the Church, but we haue experience ther-
of also in our selues and in our owne priuate exercises. Wherefore,
if by prayer thou hast this day overcome, be not negligent and se-
cure, for to morrow he will come againe more strongly armed and
prepared then he did before. Wherefore doe thou also prepare
thy selfe to a new battaile. So it commeth to passe that the same
tentation which to day we were able easily to overcome, to mor-
row shall overcome vs and giue vs the ouerthrowe. A Christian
therefore must be readily prepared, not only with strength to stand
against the enemye, but with stedfast purpose also to continue vnto
the end. For he runneth not in such a race wherein there is any
ende of his course during this life: but he runneth as it were, in a
round circle, in the which he must haue a continuall recourse thi-
ther where he first began. Wherefore our Sauour Christ saith:
He that continueth to the end shall be saued. We must not then
be discouraged by the impoyntitie of our enemye, or overcome
with tediousnes, and long continuance, but we must fight, not on-
ly

Our course
and race is as
it were in a
circle which
hath no end.

ly against the power and subtiltie of our enemye, but also against our owne weaknesse and weernes, and raise vpp our selues with this faith, that like as Satanle epeeth not, so the Lorde our God neither sle epeeth nor resteth.

Thus David setteth out vnto vs his owne example, that we being armed against all tentations which followe the remission of sinnes, shoulde giue no place to the enemye. For albeit it is most certaine, that there is mercie with the Lorde; that our sinnes are forgiven, that we are baptised into the death of Christ, that we are called by the word vnto the communion of Saintes, and that we, with the other members of Christ, are nourished by the body and blood of Christ, all these thinges (I say) although they be most certaine, yet are we still in daunger lest we be deceived of the craftie enemye, which lyeth in waite for vs on euery side. He is on our right hand by hyppocritie and securitie: he is on our lefte hand by tyrannes and desperation. Besides all this, so great is his vigilancie, that he is neuer farre of, but euer at hand. Therefore the Prophet saith: My soule wayteth on the Lorde from the morning watch, &c.

This saying of the heathen is well knowne: for he lala sepius patientia, that is; patience being often times hurt, is turned into madness. For if patience suffer any thinge, it commeth of a certain desperation, as when a man thus thinketh with him selfe: All that I suffer is but in vaine. This patience is turned into fury and is oppressed with desperation. But Christian patience will not suffer it selfe to be oppressed: but continually taketh hold vpon hope, whereby at length it preuaileth and getteth the victory. It is a harde thing not to be discouraged with such troubles as daily happen in matters pertaining to the common course of this life. But patiently to endure those afflictions which David by his owne example sheweth that Christians which haue already receiued the forgiveness of sinnes must suffer: to haue a steadfast hope in the bitter vexations of sinne and accusations of conscience, and patiently to suffer all other afflictions wherewith Satan vexeth and tormenteth the beleeuing heart, this is in deede a diuine and an heauenly vertue, and such a conflict, that God hath promised vnto it an incorruptible crowne of glory. Now ensueth an exhortation, that we shoulde follow this example of David and embrace this doctrine.

The patience of the Gentiles.

The patience of the Christians, and how it differeth from the patience of the heathen.

Vers. 7. Let Israel waite on the Lord for with the Lord is mercie, and with him is plentifull redemption.

Faith is a singular and inestimable gift.

Faith compared with charitie.

The ende of faith.

This is in deede a golden verse, worthy to be knowne and well understand: wherein David witherth and exhorteth all men by his example wholy to rest and to continue in a sure hope of the mercie of God. For faith is not so lightly to be esteemed as the papistes teach, which dreame that faith is a qualitie remaining in the hart, with the which the hart, after it can once number these syllables, I beleue in God, passeth on, as it were in a sleepe. For they that haue no experience of those conflictes which faith must endure, doe but laugh vs to scoone when we say that faith is a principall vertue, wherewith onely and alone we are iustified, deliuered from sinne, hell, death and damnation. For it is true that the wisest man saith: A foole vnderstandeth not, except ye talke of those things which are in his owne hart. These things therefore which we attribute vnto faith, they ascribe vnto charitie, & preferre charitie aboue faith. But if faith be set forth rightly & in her owne colours, it farre excelleth charitie. For behold the objects of faith. It fighteth alone before God against Satan, who neuer resteth; but warreth against faith continually, and that euery concerning death and life euerlasting, concerning sinne and the accusation of the lawe, concerning grace and the remission of sinnes. Now, if with faith you compare charitie, whose office is to be exercised in releuing the miseries and calamities of men, whether they haue needs of comfort or succour in minde or in body, who seeth not howe farre faith excelleth charitie? For howe great a difference is there betwene God & man? betwene corporall necessities & eternal death? These are therefore the exercises of faith, even in the greatest dangers to fight continually against Satan in the presence of God. For as I said before, our cruel enemy will giue vs no breathing, no time of rest. Therefore, albeit that charitie is not onely a goodly vertue, but also extendeth farre in comparison of other moral vertues, yet is faith, without all comparison, a farre moze excellent & heauenly vertue, whether ye consider the objects therof or other causes. For this is the fruite of faith, when the hart feeleth that death is overcome by the death of Christ: that sinne also is put away, & the law abolished by grace and mercie. These things are of themselves most certaine: Yet such is our infirmite, that we can noe certaine

certainly apprehend them; and therefore we are terrified with the cogitations of death and sinne. But if this hope and trust in the mercie of God were perfect, no heauines should euer oppresse the beleuing hart. Therefore Dauid vseth this exhortation, that Israel, after it hath once obteyned this mercie, should still perseuere in waiping on the Lord, and not suffer this trust and confidence in the mercie of the Lord, to be wrested from him. And here he hath respect to that great conflict, wherein the mind oppressed with calamities, beginneth to doubt of the mercie of God. In this conflict, because the mind doth not so soone feele those comforts which the word promisseth and saith beleueth; as it would doe, it is ready to despayre. Against this tentation Dauid armeth vs, and warneth vs to be mindfull that we must waite on the Lord, and neuer depart from the word, or beleue any thing against the word, and he sheweth the cause why.

why we must
still waite &
hope.

For with the Lord (sayth he) is mercie. The flesh in tentations and afflictions, thinketh that with the Lord there is nothing but wrath. The holy Ghost therefore comforteth vs, and goeth about to plucke this opinion out of our hartes, & pronounceth that there is mercie and goodness with the Lord; if we can but onely waite on the Lord and put our trust in him. This testimonie of conscience and of the holy Ghost we haue great neede of: for if we followe our owne sense, we shall be deceaued and finde in our selues the contrary. But we may not iudge of these matters according to our owne sense or as we feele in our selues, but we must stand to the worde, and thus thinke with our selues, that these are matters of sayth and not of our owne sense and feeling. For to beleue, is not to feele. Not because these thinges shall neuer be felt which we now beleue, but because faith must go before feeling and experience: And we must beleue the worde, although we feele in our owne hartes and iudgement neuer so much to the contrary. As when our hartes oppressed with calamities doe thinke God to be angrie with vs, not to care for vs, but to hate vs: then faith cleane contrary must thus assure it selfe, that with God there is neither anger nor hatred, that he neither thinketh of punishment nor offence: but although he suffer vs to be afflicted, yet he doth it not to the ende to destroy vs. For with him sayeth the Psalmie is mercie. Therefore he is mindfull of vs to doe vs good, to deliuer vs from daungers, to mortifie our sinnes, and to increase his other

With God
there is pro-
pitiation and
mercie: there-
fore there is
no anger
with him.

good gifts in vs. If these things happen not to the wicked, what marvel is it? For either they beleue not, or else if they doe, they continue not. Wherefore let vs that beleue, with faith to the hope also: so that albeit our owne sense and hart shall worke neuer so much against vs, and that God shall seeme neuer so sharpe an enemy in punishing vs, yet let vs not yeld so much to our owne sense and feeling, as to the written word and to the holy Ghost, which pronounceth that with the Lord there is mercie, who loueth vs & seeketh to doe vs good.

In tentatiōs
we must rest
vpon hope,
and beleue
the word ra-
ther then
our owne
experience
and feeling.
Rom 5. 3.

This is the truth of the holy Ghost, that we should thinke, yea most assuredly beleue, that with the Lord there is no anger: but if any calamities assaile vs, as pouertie, sickness, vexation of minde, and such like, we should endure these tentations with faith & hope, declaring our patience towards God, and hoping for deliuerance at his hande in his good time: Like as Paule also writing to the Romans willet vs to reioyce euen in our afflictions and tentations. For if God did not loue vs, Satan would not hate vs. If we were not partakers of life, our enemy would not persecute vs with death. So those which are most iust and holy, because they hold fast the hope of the remission of sinnes, Satan tempteth most of all with the hope of sinne, yea and that in such wise, as some times the taking of one litle cuppe of wine, or of one word vnadvisedly escaped, he maketh such a sinne, that baptisme and al other gifts and blessings which we possesse, seeme now to stande vs in no effect: Yea many times euen those works which are good and holy, he reproueth and condemneth as most wicked, that he may trye the tender and timorous conscience into heauines. All these things, I say, the godly doe finde and feelee. But if we should follow our owne sense and feeling without the worde, howe farre and how miserably should we wander from God? Thus Satan dealeth not with the Papistes, but goeth a contrary way to worke, excusing: yea highly commending in them most horrible and detestable crimes as excellent vertues. Contrariwise, we that desire and endeour to liue according to the will of God, and moreouer doe teach the word sincerely and faithfully, doe often times suffer such trouble and vexation of conscience, as if we liued most wickedly.

We must learne therefore out of the word, that these things happen to the godly, and must be overcome with such cogitations

as

as the holy Ghost here setteth forth, that we must thus thinke: The experi-
with our selues: I am called to the Communion and partaking ence which
of the myrite of Christ, and am baptised. If in the common counsell the word tea-
of this life there be any offences by our charytyness, there is mercy cheth.
with the Lord, and in hope of this mercie, I will let them passe.
Howeouer, our doctrine, although the world scander it and most
spicefully persecute it, must needs be true. This doctrine, after
that we once beleeue in Christ, sheweth vnto vs that with the Lord
there is nothing else but mercie. For God can no otherwise doe,
but loue vs and bestowe his benefites vpon vs. Now, if the contra-
ry appeare to my sense and feeling, I passe not, neither if I should
die for it, would I suffer this knowledge to be wrested from me:
but I stedfastly beleeue that in the earth beneath, and in the heauen
aboue there is nothing else but mercie. Thus to beleeue I am per-
suaded, not by feeling, or by mine owne experience, but by the
word, which saith: that with the Lord there is mercie for me and
all that doe beleeue. But for them that beleeue not, there is nothing
else but wrath. I will therefore ouercome my tentations with the
word, and will wyte this monition in my hart, that since I beleeue in
Iesus Christ, I doubt not but that my sinnes are pardoned through
his blood. I shall not be confounded, although all sense, reason and
experience would perswade and ppeue to me the contrary. In my
selfe I perceaue nothing but wrath, in the deuill nothing but ha-
tred, in the world nothing but extreme furie and madnes. But the
holy ghost can not lye, which telleth me to trust, because there is
mercie with the Lord, and with him is plentiful redemption.

Redemption signifieth deliuerance, and that generall, as well
from the faulte as from the punishment, but specially from the
faulte. This redemption he calleth great and plentifull because the
straitnes of our hart is such, that it can not comprehend the same.
For when we pray, we so pray, that it seemeth we would be con-
tent with a litle. And they that are in trouble or heauines of minde,
doe wish for the comfort and quietnes of one day. They that are in
pouertie would be glad to haue bread for the present day. But God
doth not thinke this enough: for he giueth aboue all that we can
either conceiue or aske. And most true it is, that we do not knowe
howe or what to aske. And here I gladly vse mine owne experi-
ence. For what and how much hath he giuen vnto me alone? I wil
then no more but that the hartlike abill of the Popes pardons
Plentiful re-
demption.
When we
pray, we are
not able to
conceiue
what great
things God
will giue vs.

might be taken away: but what a flood of wonderfull and incomparable benefite hath followed? So it alwayes true, that no man dare aske so much of God: as God is, ready and willing to give. The cause hereof is the straitnes of our hart, the slendernes of our hope, and weakenes of our faith. This plentiful redemption then, above all measure exceedeth all our petitions and desires. Wherefore the Lord hath given vs all a forme howe we shoulde pray. For if we had not this forme of prayer prescribed vnto vs, which of vs durst be bold to aske so many and so great things? We are now therefore, not onely made conquerers of sinne, hell and death by the merite of Christ: but also doe feele the bountifull and liberall hand of God towards vs euen in this life. And albeit we could neuer haue bene bold to aske so much and so many things, yet notwithstanding, he hath given vs these things, and will giue vs also more.

God both
heareth vs
graciously,
and giueth
vnto vs
plentifully,

Therefore the Prophete saith that this redemption is plentiful, because it exceedeth our capacite. For like as we slenderly beleue, so we slenderly aske. But our father in heauen rapneth plentifully vppon the litle poore sparkes of our prayer, and smitteth downe of our faith, and recompenseth his delay in giuing, with great abundance. For although we must still waite, yet is our deliuerance so much the greater. Iacob, which is Israel, waited for the Lord & what followed? That people so mightely increasing and multiplying of so small beginnings, afterward chaunged the whole world. And if Abraham had strene all his posteritie, and all the wonderful actes which God wrought amongst them, would he not haue said (thinke you) that he coulde neuer haue hoped or once haue thought, that this should euer haue come to passe? True it is, that Abraham beleued the promise of God: But that there should be such a wonderful and glorious bewtie of his posteritie, he could not beleue because of the straitnes of mans hart. So the Church after Christ, prayed for the aduancing of Gods kingdom, and after this prayer followed the ruine of the Romane kingdom, which before seemed to be inuincible. We likewise pray at this day for deliuerance. The day of the Lord therefore shall come, and shall destroy the whole world, with all the power of Satan & bel. This ouerly therefore let vs haue in mind, that we may continue in faith & hope. Then shall the Lord make a glorious end of all our troubles. For God wil not forsake vs, except we first giue ouer to hope

hope and pray. Let the faithfull rest therefore in this comfort, that their oppression and affliction shall neuer be so great, but their deliuerance shall be greater: And if they thinke otherwise, they thinke not well. For this is the summe & effect of the first precept, which Dauid here expreſſeth: with the Lord there is plenteous redemption. For this is to be a god in deede, even to redeme and to deliuer, & that with greater maiesty and glory, then any mortal man it can be conceived.

The effect of the first precept.

Vers. 3. And he shall redeme Israel from all his iniquities.

This promise is a conclusion of the psalme. Wherein againe he sheweth what cause he had to pray, & what we also in like danger should hope for. And in deede it is a sweete and a joyfull thing to behold the goodnes of the Lord, not onely in that he giueth, governeth and preserueth this life, but much rather in that he sheweth him selfe an enemy to sinne and death: and this he doth to save and to deliuer vs from the danger thereof. For this is it that maketh all other gifts of God more sweete & pleasant. For although we know that we are the creatures of God, yet notwithstanding, because we are oppressed with heauines, feare, death, the guilt of conscience and such other calamities, we can not enjoy the gifts of God with a free and a cheereful hart. This is then to paynt our God in his owne colours, so that this life & Gods creatures may be sweete vnto vs, when he is sette forth according to this verse, namely that he will deliuer his people from their sinnes, slay death, destroy hel, and wreake downe Satan vnder his feet. Such a God is the God of those that beleue: that beleue I say. For they that beleue, although they be weake and feeble harted, and vexed of the deuill and death, yet they knowe that God is their deliuerer from all their iniquities. Therefore they are reysed vpper with comfort and begin to hope, waiping for deliuerance promised in the word.

We shall therefore apply this verse to this ende, that it may be as a definition what is the office of God, and what his will is properly to doe; namely that he will haue to doe with sinners, that he will abolish sinne & create life, righteousness & all good things. Now, the meane whereby God worketh these things, you know is Christ, whom he sent into this world and layed vpon him the

A definition of God, and what he is properly.

punishment of death, that they which beleue on him, might ob-
taine remission of their finnes and be made the children of God.
This teacheth and treateth the whole psalme: not of this eter-
nall life or good woorkes, but onely of faith and hope towards God
through Christ, and of the small victorie ouer sinne and death. For
these things are not gotten by the woorkes and power of man, but
by the woork and power of God alone: and they are communica-
ted vnto vs, because there is mercie with the Lorde, and with
him is plentiful redemption. This is the onely meanes and the
way whereby this victorie is gotten. The doctrine of woorkes hath
an other end, and is so to be taught, that the glory of God and the
merite of Christ be nothing thereby diminished: like as we by the
grace of Christ haue sincerely and faithfully euery where hand-
led this doctrine. God graunt that the same light may shine alwaies
our posteritie. Amen.

The 131. Psalm.

Lorde myne hart is not haucie, &c.

The argu-
ment of the
Psalm.

Pride is a
vice commo-
vnto all men.

Wisdome
maketh men
proude.

This psalme treateth in a manner of the same matter that the
psalme going before speaketh of, sauing that the former psalme
expresseth the contrary more plainly and largely: Whereby he
most liuely paynteth out an afflicted conscience, oppressed with
the feeling and burthen of sinne. This psalme hath bene hereto-
fore vsed of the diuines against all manner of pride and presumption,
a common vice of all mankind, and from the which there is not
one of vs free neither can it be cured by any other remedy, then ei-
ther by the grace of God, or by the way of God, that is, when ei-
ther the goodly afflictions are corrected with fatherly chastise-
ment, or the wicked are plagued with seuerer punishment. By these
meanes presumption the naturall vice of all men, is cured: O-
therwise it is not possible but that man should presume, either of
his owne wisdom, or of his owne power, or of his owne righte-
ousnes. This pride afterwarde bringeth forth contention. As
for example, we see how many and sundry waies men are exerci-
sed with such matters as pertaine to the estimation, or to praise
and commendation of the witte & wisdom of man. For here one
man thinketh better of him selfe then of an other: one man will be
counted

counted wiser: and better learned than an other. What will such
wittes doe (thinke you) when they shall afterwarde come to the
handling of Gods matters? Likewise power: betwixt mens
harts, that they can make no ende of proud denials and counsells.
The same hapned to the Phariseis & hypocrites (for that is pro-
per vnto them) when they conceived an opinion of their owne holi-
nes and righteousness. To be briefe, proud and presumptuous men
are troublers, not only of them selues, but also of p^r common wealth;
of the Church, of households and families, & of all things else. They
that are skilful in histories, doe see what great euils proud & am-
bitious wittes haue alwaies raised vpon. So in the Church, hereticks
stirred vpon with a persuasion of their owne wisdom, are troublers
of peace and concord. The same cometh to passe also in families
& household matters: whereof riseth this p^rouerbe among the Ben-
jamites: They which attempt that they can not bring to passe, are
woorthely plagued. But who are they, I pray you? Forsooth euen
the whole world. For what is he that is contented in his own gift, & at-
tempteth not somewhiles to do better & more exactly, then he is a-
ble to accomplish? Wherefore the third euill necessarily followeth; &
like as presumption breaketh quietnes & concord, & alwayes as a
fruitful mother begeth strife & dissencion: so at the last followeth
banitic of vanities, & the attempts of the wicked are all in vaine.

Righteous-
nes.

A dutch pro-
uerbe.

This vice teacheth a reigneth farre, & can not be cured by any
other remedie (as I haue sayd) then either by grace or by wrath.
By grace, I meane, when by affliction our harts are humbled: and
we brought to this point, that we can thinke modestly of our owne
gift. By wrath, when God opp^resseth the wicked with punishments
and plagues, & taketh them away as he took away Pharo, whose
stubbernes and obstinacie could not be cured; but by destruction in
the redde sea. So the Beniamites did not cease from their furie,
until they were almost consumed. In like maner Absolon could
neuer be quiet until he was hanged vpon a tree. Arius also & Co-
sinthus, which many authors of new sectes and errors in these our
daies, could neuer rest until they came to such an end: their acts
& enterprises did deserue. Thus cometh it to passe, that when the
wicked haue once taken their route, like a man a wilde horse, they
neuer rest until they come to an insupportable end. The same hapneth
also to all those which seeke to be iustified by their works. The phari-
seis neuer ceased to persecute the Gospel and to trust in their own

Two meanes
to reforme
the vice of
pride & pre-
sumption.

righteousnes, vntill Ierusalem; & kingdom & the priesthood were bitterly destroyed. This is the ende of presumption when it is not humbled and repressed by the word. True it is therefore that this enemie can not be remedied, but either by grace or by wayth.

This Psalm
speakech of
spirituall
pride.

Thus generally, in a maner they vnderstand this psalme to be written against pride and presumption. But, in my iudgement, it may be moze aptly applyed vnto the spirituall pride of mans own righteousness. For (as before I haue sayd), these three thinges make men proud, wisdom, power & righteousness. You may therefore, if you list, make three kinds of pride according to these three objects. For they are giftes of God distributed vnto men, and haue their measure and their meane appointed vnto them. They therefore that are wise, are wise according to their measure, and can not be moze wise. They which are mightie, are mightie according to their measure, and can not be moze mightie. Likewise they which are righteous, are righteous according to their measure, and can not be moze righteous. But pride maketh them desirous to seeme moze wise, moze mightie & moze righteous then they are in deede. Whereupon it followeth, that when the matter commeth to the trial, and sinne striveth with righteousness, exceeding her owne gift and measure, then is righteousness ouercome and made desperate, which oftentimes driueth hypocrites to the halter. So it commeth often times to passe, that impotency fighteth against power, & ouercometh: As it hapned to the Israelites fighting against the one onely tribe of Benjamin. In like maner foolishnes many times ouercometh & confoundeth wisdom. And of this strange successe what is the cause? Forsooth euen this, that men doe not trust in the Lord, but presume of their owne wisdom, power & righteousness, contrary to the word and will of God. For God will haue vs to trust ouerly in his power and mercie. But thus wil men haue it, and thus they thinke, that they are mightie, righteous and wise to this ende, that they should trust in these titles and presume thereof. Wherefore this they finde at length and that iustly; that they are most miserable and unhappie. For why do they not that which they are able, & why enterprise they that which they are not able to doe? Most worthy are they therefore, to be punished and plagued, according to the Dutch proverbe, because they attempt that which they are not able to accomplish.

Pride at the
length is con-
founded.

Let vs therefore abide in humilitie, and let vs thinke moderat-
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ly and modestly of our owne gift. Let vs not iudge other: let vs not
 oppresse other: let vs not be witty & busie in other mens affaires:
 but let vs doe that which pertaineth to our vocation, and let euery
 one of vs so much the moze diligently fight against this vice, by
 how much we finde and fele the same to be fixed and rooted in our
 nature and in euery one of vs: albeit it sheweth it selfe in one moze
 and in an other lesse, as also the histories of the Gentiles and hea-
 then men doe declare. For Cicero was moze ambitious then De-
 mosthenes, peradventure because he lyued in a greater kingdom
 and a mightie Monarchie. Likewise Iulius Caesar was moze am-
 bitious then Augustus. So in spirituall matters, Pharao had an
 obstinacie ioyned with pride. To conclude, all the examples bot h
 of the holy Scriptures and also of the Gentiles doe shewe this to
 be the ende and successe of proud and presumptuous persons, that
 suddenly the wrath of God falling vpon them when they least of
 all feare it, they are confounded and miserably perish. But (as I
 haue said) we will leaue this generall interpretation, and apply
 this Psalm to the spirituall pride which consisteth in the opinion
 of mans owne righteousness.

Verse. 1. Lord mine harte is not hawtie, neither are mine eyes
 loftie, neither haue I walked in great matters and hid
 from me.

In that David thus gloryeth & reioiceth, he doth it being taughte
 by his owne experience. As if he said: I haue proued what an a-
 will thing it is, to be haueie and high minded, and to rest securely
 in the opinion of righteousness, wherefore I wil no moze be now
 high minded: I will not glory any longer in mine owne righte-
 ousnes. For the proud Pharisee which braggeth that he is not as
 other men be, when his conscience beginneth once to accuse him,
 forthwith is cast down and stricken with terror, and is not able to
 stand against the least sinne. I speake not of the huge mountaines
 and seas of sinnes and iniquities, which in a moment do swallow
 by and consume the proude and secure. It is good therefore (saith
 he) O Lord that thou hast humbled me, and hast schooled me by
 afflictions, that I should not be proude, that I should not seeme
 holy in myne owne conceite, that I should not make my selfe as a
 Iudge and a Cenour, iudging and condemning al men. For that
 is the propertie of all Iusticiaries and such as trust in their owne

The Iustici-
 aries iudge
 & condemne
 rashly.

¶ ii.

righteousnes, holines and perfection. As the example of the Pharisee in the Gospell doth declare; which is not content to reckon vp his owne vertues and good workes, but wish all he must needs condemne the poore publicane.

This is the sinne of naturall and moꝛall righteousness of the righteousness of the lawe, to condemne others, to presume and to clyme euen to the iudgement seate of God, and to pronounce sentence against those whom they thinke; not to be so perfect as them selues. He that is a sely Citizen or a learned lawer thinketh highly of him self, and maketh him selfe as it were a certaine idoll due to him selfe, but others he condemneth and in comparisson of him self proudly cōdemneth. The husbandman, when he seeth any fault in the Magistrate, thinketh as did that seruant in the Poet: Oh, why was not I made a King, a Ruler, a Magistrate? These be but politike matters full of vanities & most fond follies and foolishnes, and yet there is none of vs all which are able therein to bridle and moderate our selues except the holy Ghost doe guide and rule our hartes, and teach vs that this righteousness, whether it be naturall or moꝛall, is but as a worke of mans hand, which maketh vs no whit the better before God. And in deede there is no man so foolish that will thinke him selfe the better Christian or more acceptable before God, because he is a Tayler, a Carpenter or a Shoemaker: And yet, although the case be all one, there is no man which doth not presume of this righteousness, whether it be moꝛall or naturall, except the holy Ghost bridle him and bring him into the right way. For it hath a goodly shew of holynesse, and therefore it puffeth vpp the mindes of men with pride, vntill they be humbled of the Lorde, and so learne that there is no helpe in this righteousness before the iudgement of God.

There is no cause why a man should more presume of his owne righteousness then of the art or handycraft which he exerciseth.

The most notable personages in aduersitie are commonly oppressed with anguish and sorrow.

How often haue we sene, that great & notable diuines, which liued among men in a maruelous shew of holines, & in a great presumption of their owne righteousness, at length when death approached, haue fallen into desperation, & fled to most vaine & foolish cries for help & succour, in so much that not only yet liuing they wrapped them selues in a fyres coule, but also being dead were buried in the same. So, I remember, a notable man & among lawyers of name & fame the chiefest, when he was at the point of death uttered these words: O si subulcus potius quam iureconsultus fuissē. Oh (saith he) that I had bene a swineheard rather then a lawyer. For

he

he perceaued that in that daunger the administration of iustice, be it neuer so exact, helpeth nothing. In like case, when Cicero saw him self to be in daunger through the power of Augustus and Antonius his aduersaries, he perceiued that there was no comfort nor succour to be found in all his great knowledge and learning: but that all his learning, and all that great studie and knowledge of philosophie banished away and auailed him nothing. The same hapned likewise to Demosthenes flying from Antipater.

To conclude, all such examples doe teach that to be most true which Salomon sayth: He that exalteth his house, seeketh destruction. But this our Courtiers doe not beleue. They clyme & loue to be aloft, they seeke to rule, and in deed they rule euen as he that driueth the cart until it sticke fast in the myze, and can neither goe forward nor backward. And this is the cause that kingdomes and common weales are, in a manner, nothing else, but ruines and destructions. Who would thinke, if he consider the ciuill government which was vnder the first Emperours, that y^e Romane Empire, yea and many other common weales also, could continue the space of one day? For, as Titus Linius sayth, they can neither abide their faulces to be touched, nor remedies to be applyed thereunto, and therefore they fall of their owne sway, as an house that is builded to high.

But the daunger is much greater when in Religion men haue proud lookes and proud hartes, and walke in such matters as are hidden from them: that is to say, when they please them selues because of their holines, & thinke that they sitt in Gods owne lappe, and yet know nothing of the free mercie of God in Christ, and the forgiveness of sinnes, but walke altogether in their owne workes, and say with the Pharisey, that they fast twise a weeke, they giue sayth, they are not adulterers, extortioners, vniust, although their hartes be full of all maner of filthie lustes. This presumption continueth vntill they see them selues to be in daunger of death: then all these wayne helpes, with all their false hopes vanish away, and these voyces of desperation of such like follow: I haue liued wickedly, I haue broken my bowes, I haue not obserued my rule, &c. Why then (I say) wast thou made a Monke? was it not because thou shouldest ascende to righteousnes? But by this meanes thou hast descended into hell, because thou wouldest be exalted. They that rest in the confidence and trust of their owne righteousnes, ei-

Q. iii.

ether fall at the length into these tentations, or else they dye like an
oyle as a come.

Vers. 2. VVhen I did humble my soule and cause it to keepe
silence, then was I as a childe that is wayned from his
mother.

Heb. 12. 2.

Here he sheweth plainly by his owne experience, what dam-
ger it is for a man to trust to his owne righteousnes. Wherefore
let vs learne what these wordes in the Epistle to the Hebrewes:
The sinne hanging fast on or cleauing fast vnto vs, doe importe.
And let vs not follow the foolish and rash opinion of the common
people, which by a fewe sermons thinke them selues to haue attein-
ed the knowledge of the whole Scripture. Thou hast peraduenture
heard all, but thou hast not yet beleued al. Thou hast not lea-
ned those experiences and p[re]cises, which in a Christian are the
chiefest, namely of faith, of prayer, & of the crosse, whereof Dauid
here treateth most effectually and diuinely, as the excellencie ther-
of doth require. I caused my soule (sayth he) to keepe silence and
humbled my selfe. I sayd vnto my soule: be still: gloyp not, hold
thy peace. When he sayth: I caused my soule to keepe silence,
the hebreiw word signifieth to confound or bring to nothing: As in
Osea it is sayd: I will make thy mother, that is to say, the Syna-
goge, to keepe silence. As much to say, as I will destroy her and
make her wast. So in an other psalme he sayth: Be still, that is,
prouoke not the Lord with your obstinacie and presumption, but
obey and humble your selues. So sayth he here: When I did not
refrayne from presumption and trusting in mine owne righteous-
nes and the righteousnes of the lawe, yea euen in God him selfe, if
he be worshipped by keeping of the law: when I did not desire that
God (although after a sort, I kept the lawe) would not enter into
iudgement with his seruauant: this (I say) when I did not, then
was I in deede euen as a child wayned from his mothers brest.

A similitude
of an infant.

The Prophet speaketh here of a matter of great importance,
and yet this similitude seemeth to set forth some light or final mat-
ter. For why both he rather take his similitude of a childe, then of
a man which is growne to his full strength? But this is not onely
a fitte, but also a very goodly and a pleasant similitude. For what
greater miserie can happen to a childe, then to be wayned and kept
from the mothers brest? This seemeth to the infant a very death
and

and destruction. So saith he here: When I was ledde away with the spirit of pride and securitie, and lost the bugge of Gods heavenly grace, that is to say, of the remission of sinnes and of the free mercie of God in Christ, then was I in verbe like unto a child which hath lost his mother, without whose ayde and succour he can not Hue: that is, I was brought to extreme and most certaine daunger of death and condemnation.

Wherefore the prophet leadeth vs here to that necessary distinction betwene the law & the Gospel. For the law is a necessary doctrine to beat downe the pride of sinns in vs, which riseth of confidence of our owne righteousness. There is also (as before I haue said) a presumption in riches, power & wisdom: but that presumption may be cured many wayes. But this which presumeth of our own righteousness, is incurable except that waining come wherof David here speaketh: by the meanes wherof our conscience being stirred vp through the terror of Gods law, is forced to examine our life, our maners & conuersation. But because we are constrained to confesse, that we haue many waies offered against Gods law, it can not be, but that certaine desperation must needs follow, except Christ, as a tender & a louing mother, giue vnto vs Gods bugge of grace, & raise vp our oppressed & afflicted soules. So Iudas was diuine to Gods halber by the sight of his sinne. For there is no remedy wherby the secretly conscience tormented with sinne, can be healed, but this alone, to beleue (as the former psalme teacheth) that in the Lord there is mercie & plentiful redemption. This is Gods voice of the Gospel, which must follow Gods law: wherunto also there is a way prepared by the law. For like as our sinnes must be repponed & accused: so the terror which this accusation bringeth, hath need of consolation. Wherefore the true consolation and the true propitiation which is sette forth in the Gospell, pertaineth to true sinnes which diuine a man downe to hell, vntill they be cured by the mercie of God set forth vnto vs in Christ. For mercie pertaineth not to fained sinnes, but to true sinnes which kill and condemne the soule.

This order therefore is to be obserued, that when we glorie or presume of our selues and become secure, then should the lawe and Moyses come with his bright shining face, which our weakness can not abide, & yet notwithstanding it can not auoyd the same. Now, after that the lawe and Moyses haue done their office in this sorte by accusing the conscience and threatening the iudgement of

The doctrine
of the law.

The voyce
and doctrine
of the gospel

* This propitiation is not for fained or for small sinnes: but for true sinnes & for great, yea & the greatest sinnes.

Q. iiii.

God for sinne and punishment for the same, then is there place and opportunitie for Christ to come with the dugges of grace, to comfort and refresh the wayned child crying for lacke, and seeking the mothers brest. Wherefore this is an excellent similitude, which setteth forth vnto vs, first our owne weakenes, namely that there is in vs no strength at all whereby we may be able to withstande Satan and to heale our wounded conscience: then also the mercie of God and power of his word whereby he sustenteth and nourisheth vs, as a mother nourisheth her child with milke, filleth it and kepeth it from crying. So the Gospell is both the wombe of God in the which we are caried, formed, and fashioned by the spirit of Christ, and also it is the dugges whereby we are nourished & fed. Wherefore if we once lose this dugges, we are as children wayned from the mothers brest.

The difference between the law and the Gospell in vse and practise is very hard.

Some thinke them selues highly learned in these matters, and that they know them wel enough. But take ye heede, and beware of this presumption. Recken your selues in the number of scholars and learners. For Satan is so craftie, that he can easily take away this distinction, and force vpon vs in steede of the Gospell the law, and againe, in steede of the lawe the Gospell. For how often commeth it to passe, that poore and miserable consciences in the agony of death lay hold vpon certain sentences of the Gospell, which doe in deede pertaine vnto the lawe, and thereby lose the sweete comfort and consolation of the Gospell? As for example: If thou wilt enter into life, keepe the commaundements. Again, Not euery one that sayeth, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heauen. With such sentences poore and feeble consciences are so bzused and broken, that they can see nothing but what they haue done, and what they ought to haue done: Also what God requireth, and what he forbiddeth. These things whyles troubled & afflicted consciences doe beholde, they forget what so euer Christ hath done, or God by Christ hath promised to do for our comfort. Wherefore let no man presume of the fulnes and perfection of his knowledge in these matters. In wordes this distinction is easie to be made, but in deede and daungers we finde how vnable we are to play the good Logicians, when we must dispute of the thinges which we haue done or ought to haue done: when the lawe obiection in this maner against vs: This hath God commaunded thee to do and thou hast not done it, but hast done the contrary: Wherefore

foze thou shalt be damned according to the sentence of the lawma-
ker. Here he that is a good Logician putteth a difference betwene
the law and the Gospel, and graunteth, that in deede he hath not
kept the law. Notwithstanding (saith he) vpon this antecedent
or former proposition doeth not followe this consequence; that I
should ther efoze despaire and be damned. For the Gospel com-
maundeth me to beleue in Christ, and to trust vnto the workes, the
merites and the righteousness of Christ. He that vnderstandeth
this, and taketh holde on this best or dugg of the Gospel; is safe
and is sure of the victorie; but he that apprehendeth it not, muste
needes perith and despaire.

In this doctrine therefore touching our righteousness before
God there is great daunger. We must not pzeume therefore, but
walke in feare & humilitie. For if pzeumption in politike & worl-
ly matters, when men are proude of their riches power or wise-
dom, is not without daunger: in diuine matters it is much moze dan-
gerous, yea a most daungerous and damnable, and yet notwithstanding
there it reigneth most of all. For Satan commeth to y child-
ren of God, and laboureth with all might and subtiltie to bring
them to pzeumption and securitie. Ther efoze they must fight
continually against this hidde and lurking popson; and aboue all
thinges they muste beware that they flatter not them selues as
though they knew well enough the distinction of the lawe and the
Gospell. In deede thou mayst knowe it: but consider wel whether
thou hast sure hold thereof, so that it cannot be wrested from thee
by Satan & thine owne conscience. Paule plainely confesseth that
he hath not yet attained to this knowledge, but followeth it as one
running in the race and pzeeling towards the marke. *Phil. 3.*

So it goeth with vs all. We turne our face vnto the marke,
and this is the race wee runne, that we may attaine vnto the
marke. But that will not be vntill this flesh be put of and layed in
the earth. Therefore in the meane season let vs walke in feare
and humbleness of harte, with hartie prayer, that the light which
he hath opened vnto vs, he will not suffer to be put out, but that
he will dayly lighten our mindes and make perfecte the worke
which he hath begunne in vs. Thus who so doe not, shall be o-
uerwhelmed and oppressed with desperation, and shall be like vn-
to childezen that are wayned and put a parte from their mothers
breastes.

Ysa. 3. Let Iſraell wait on the Lord for truſt in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

This verſe ſheweth plainly that the Prophet ſpeaketh here of that preſumption which is contrary to faith, and is called the preſumption of mans owne righteouſnes. Therefore he exhorteth the faithfull to truſt in the Lord, and withall to abide in humilitie: to mortifie that truſt and confidence which man hath in the lawe and in his owne righteouſnes. This ſhall ye doe (ſaith he) if ye truſt in the Lord, not onely for this day or to morrowe, but now and for ever. So that ye muſt haue a certaine continuall and a conſtant preſumption (if I may ſo ſay) of the mercie of God, of the forgiveness of finnes, and of the righteouſnes that cometh by Chriſt. Contrariwiſe, ye muſt beware that ye neuer preſume of your owne workes: albeit they ought to be help and according to the law of God. For this naked, and this otieſly truſt ought to remaine, which is called the confidence of the free mercie of God, offered vnto vs in Chriſt. This truſt is ſure and neuer deceiveth vs. For God is no lyer, but faithfullly performeth that he hath promiſed. Doe thou therefore but truſt, and ſtill faithfullly reſt vpon his promiſe. But here we are not without daunger of the deuill, whiche goeth about with all his might and power, to bying vs from this aſſurance and truſt of the mercie of God to wardes vs in Chriſt. Wherefore we muſt fight, and with continuall battaile practiſe this doctrine againſt the deuill and ſpirituall wickednes, which by all meanes goe about, firſt to liſt vs by with pride and preſumption, and afterwards to throwe vs downe againe to deſperation.

But God worketh a contrary way. For firſt he terrifieth vs and caſteth vs downe, that afterwards he may raiſe vs vp againe. He bringeth vs downe to hel, that he may bying vs back againe. The bugge of grace alſo be ſometimes taketh from vs, that we may learne what our owne righteouſnes is wont to doe, namely to oppreſſe vs with deſperation. And this he doth to the ende that we hauing experience thereof, ſhould not followe our owne ſenſe and reaſon, but raiſe vp our ſelues with a ſure hope & truſt in Chriſte, whereby the dead are reſtozed to liſe and ſaued. This mercie is as a ſtrong heauen of firmament ouer vs, wherewith we beeing covered, are ſafe and ſure where ſo ever we be. So Eſay calleth it a ſha-

name.

now against the heate, because we are covered and defended by the mercie of God, against wrath, desperation, the deuill & death. This shadow who so euer doe forsake, shal suffer intolerable heat. Thus we learne by this verse, that Dauid speaketh of that damnable presumption of our owne righteousness, & exhorteth vs to fight against it with a sure hope of Gods eternall mercie, and a constant faith. This is the onely way whereby we are saued.

The 132. Psalme.

Lord remember Dauid, &c.

This psalme, whether it be Salomons (as it seemeth) or whether it be Davids, it is a prayer for the kingdom & the priesthoode; for these two are the most principall giftes of God in this worlde; Therefore they haue neede of prayer and the helpe of God, to defend them against the deuill, whose double tittle ye knowe, which Christ giueth vnto him in the Gospel of Iohn when he calleth him a lyer and a murderer. For he reſecth not, but busily laboureth & seeketh by all meanes possible, to replenish the worlde with lyes & murders. Against these two policies and kingdoms of the deuill, God hath erected two other kingdoms, the politike state, and the priesthoode, the one to fight against murder, and the other against false doctrine and heresies. So Dauid and all other Kinges and Princes in gouerning the common wealth, ought to endeuor, that their subiectes may liue a peaceable and a quiet life, that marriages, the education of children, & other duties pertaining to household gouernment, may be mainteyned and defended against seditious, and wicked persons. The priesthoode is to this ende, that children growing vp, may be brought to the kingdom of heauen; and the ministers of the Church are as Angells appointed to defend the truth, that the kingdom of Satan the father of lyes, may be destroyed. These be the proper offices of the ministers of the Church and of the worde, which ministers haue bene alwayes in the worlde among the faithfull, and haue kept continuall battaile against heretikes and the ministers of Satan. So the Patriarkes before the flood, fought against the Canaites or offspring of Cain; after the flood against the Elutites, and others. The Prophets fought against the false prophetes, as their writings doe testifie,

The argument of the Psalme.

The end of the politike gouernment.

The ende of priesthoode.

Ier. 33. Let Iſraell wait on the Lord for truſt in the Lord from henceforth and for euer.

This verſe ſheweth plainly that the Prophet ſpakeſt here of that preſumption which is contrary to faith, and is called the preſumption of mans owne righteouſnes. Therefore he exhorteth the faithfull to truſt in the Lord, and withall to abide in humilitie: to mortifie that truſt and confidence which man hath in the lawe and in his owne righteouſnes. This ſhall ye doe (ſaith he) if ye truſt in the Lord, not onely for this day or to morrowe, but now and for euer. So that ye muſt haue a certaine continuall and a conſtant preſumption (if I may ſo ſay) of the mercie of God, of the forgiveness of finnes, and of the righteouſnes that cometh by Chriſt. Contrariwiſe, ye muſt beware that ye never preſume of your owne workes: albeit they ought to be help and according to the law of God. For this naked, and this onely truſt ought to remaine, which is called the confidence of the free mercie of God, offered vnto vs in Chriſt. This truſt is ſure and neuer deceiveth vs. For God is no lyer, but faithfullly performeth that he hath promiſed. Doe thou therefore but truſt, and ſtill faithfullly reſt vpon his promiſe. But here we are not without daunger of the deuill, whiche goeth about with all his might and power, to bring vs from this aſſurance and truſt of the mercie of God to wardes vs in Chriſt. Therefore we muſt fight, and with continuall battaile practiſe this doctrine againſt the deuill and ſpirituell wickednes, which by all meanes goe about, firſt to liſt vs vpon with pride and preſumption, and afterwards to throwe vs downe againe to deſperation.

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The argument of the psalme,

The end of the politike government.

The end of the priesthoode.

word: Apostles likewise against the false apostles: For Satan seeth not: And besides this, the kingdom of Satan was alwaies the greater. For if ye consider the church, there were euer more godles and infidels, then saythfull. So in the ciuill gouernment the greater part consisteth of those which are disobedient, which raise vp troubles, seditions and warres.

Wherefore, since the kingdom of Satan (if ye consider the number) is the greater: and mozeouer, since both the politike state and the priesthoode are such as farre exceede the power of man, & therefore can not be defended & mainteyned by our strength or policie: hereby we may see how necessary this prayer is, whereby Dauid desireth that they may prosper and continue. And here first of all marke the difference betwene Dauid and other Princes of the world. Other Princes and rulers doe also vnderstand and see that common weales can not be preserved by mans power. Wherefore they sayd that he which should well & happily gouerne, had neede to be endued with some diuine and godly power. And albeit they were ignorant that these thinges are gouerned by God, yet they preferred fortune (for so they called the blessing of God, the cause whereof they did not know) before wisdom, power, iustice and all princely vertues. For where as iust men, for the most part be oppressed, and the vniust doe rule and reigne, therefore they thought that iustice is not the meane whereby kingdomes and common weales are preserved. For then Cicero should not haue bene oppressed, nor Antonius aduanced to such power and authoritie. If by power kingdomes could be preserved, then should not Themistocles haue overcome Xerxes. Likewise many notable Emperours lacked no wisdom nor industrie, and yet were they miserable notwithstanding. These examples and this experience caused the Gentiles to thinke that there was a certeyne diuine power in great Monarches and Emperours, to rule & gouerne their earthly power, wisdom and iustice, whereby they did so prosper vppon the earth, and this they called fortune.

What Gen-
tiles thought
as touching
the gouern-
ment of Em-
pires & king-
doms.

Dauid know-
eth that king-
doms are pre-
served by
God alone.

But here behold and consider Dauid. He also seeth that it is not in his power to preserve and uphold his kingdom, and yet doth he not thinke, that it is fortune which supporteth & upholdeth kingdomes: for he beleueth that this pertaineth to God alone. Besides this, he beleueth (as ye shall heare) that God for his mercies sake will not reiect those that call vpon him. But the Gentiles knewe
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neither of these things. For euer, the same necessitie which moueth the Prince or the Magistrate to pray for the common wealthe, moueth him also to pray for the Priesthood and for the Church of God. So we see that this Psalm is a prayer for the people of the olde Testament, that God would preserve the kingdome and Priesthood, euen for his promises made vnto Dauid. It is likewise profitable for vs, and is of vs to be applied vnto our selues also, for that we in like maner haue our Dauid and our Euphrata, in the whiche we haue founde the Tabernacle or habitation of our God. For the selfe same thinges doe remaine, and there is no more but the signification of the wordes to be chaunged. Now, like as they were in daunger as touching both the kingdome and the priesthood: so is our daunger great also in them both. Wherefore we may well sing with Dauid: Remember, &c.

Here I purpose simply to follow the sence and meaning of the letter, declaring howe this Psalm was vsed and applyed of that people. Afterwards it shall be easie for vs to apply the same to our owne time & age. Now, like as that was a double kingdome, that is to say, corporall and spirituall: so is the Psalm also diuided into two parties: For first it prayeth for the Church, and then for the politike state of the common wealthe.

Verse. 1. Lord remember Dauid, with all his afflictions.

The history of the Kings doth declare, that Dauid being persecuted of Saul, suffered many and great afflictions. But why did Saul thus persecute Dauid? Because he was anointed of Samuel to be king, whiles Saul was yet liuing. For herof came the deadly persecutions, the hatred, slaunders, reproches & all kindes of calamities which Dauid suffered. Now, whereas these troubles & afflictions of Dauid were mentioned in prayer and in the presence of God, either by his sonne Solomon or by the people, it was not done, as the Papistes thinke, to the ende that Dauid should pray for them: but they spake of Dauid in respect of the promises, & put God, as it were in remembrance of those promises by speaking of Dauid: as Paule also speaketh of Abraham, Wherefore the name of Dauid is not here to be taken absolutely, as though they spake of his person onely: for (as I said) they spake of him as hauing the promises, and clothed, as it were with the promises of God: so

The signification of the words here vsed, as of Dauid, Euphrata, the temple, the priesthood, are chaunged, but the thinges remaine.

The Papists doe dreame that Salomo and the people did pray vnto God, y he would heare them for Dauids sake, or at the intercession of Dauid, &c thereby would sta-

blish inuoca-
tion of Sain-
tes and pray-
ing to the
deade.

The name of
Dauid inclu-
deth the pro-
mises, and
therefore al-
so it inclu-
deth mercie.

Luke. 18. 12.

How he ma-
keth menti-
on of Dauids
afflictions.

Places of the
olde Testa-
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on of Saints

The idolatry
of the Pa-
pistes.

that here we must rather vnderstande the forme then the matter. The promise I call the forme, to teach & set forth the thing more plainly: and the matter I call Dauid him selfe, to whom the promises were made.

This is then the sense and meaning of these wordes: O Lord God, we pray vnto thee for the kingdom, not counting our selues worthy or by any meanes to haue deserued that we shoulde be heard: but (as Daniel saith): We present our supplications before thee, trusting in thy great and tender mercies, & in that which thou hast promised to Dauid: to witt, that our kingdom shall endure for ever. Thus he beginneth his prayer with a remembrance of Gods promises euen at the first entrance. This is a singular example for vs, that when we pray, we shoulde appeare in the presence of God as miserable & wretched sinners, not trusting vpon our owne merite or worthines, but clothed, as ye would say, with his mercies and promises: not as he that bragged: I fast twice in a weeke: but as he which said, Remember Lord thy promises: For the promises of God are nothing else but mercies and compassions freely offered vnto vs in Christ.

Thus we see, that he speaketh not here of afflictions absolutely, but in respect of an other thing: for he vnderstandeth the afflictions which Dauid suffered for the promises: in the which afflictions he helde fast the promises and suffered them not to be wrestled from him. The same promises did God likewise performe vnto Dauid. Like as therefore (saith he) O Lord, thou diddest preferue Dauid suffering all calamities and afflictions for thy words sake and trusting in thy word, so with like mercie preferue and saue vs trusting in thy promises, and performe that thou hast begunne in vs. For all thinges must be preferred to the promises: like as Moses also doth, which saith: Remember Abraham, Isaac, &c. For he doth not call vpon Abraham and Isaac, as the vblearned Papistes dreame, but he alleageth the promises made vnto them as touching their seede and posteritie. Nowe, how could God be put in minde of these promises better, then by reciting those persons to whom God had made the promises? These promises the faithfull doe set against their sinnes and against their vnworthines.

These thinges must be diligently taught, that we fall not into the absurd and foolish opinions of the Papistes, whose schoole diuinitie knoweth nothing of the promises of God: but whereas the

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the promises are the chiefest part of the Scripture; they are betterly ignorant thereof. The other part of the Scripture, which is the law, they so maim and mangle, that scarcely they set forth the one halfe thereof. And hereof it cometh that they expound such sentences as this is; so corruptly and perversely, as if the Psalm should speake after this maner: Remember David, how good and howe holy a man he was, and for his merites, for his holines establish vnto vs the kingdom. But this sentence is plaine idolatry: for it looketh to the actiue or working person only: As the Iewes thinke to obteyne their Messias by their owne merites. So the religion of the Iewes, the Turkes and the Papistes is all one: for they all trust to their owne workes and worthines. But we reiect the working person when we come into the presence of God, and looke vnto that person which is altogether passive & clothed with the promises, that is to say, such a David as bringeth and distributeth vnto vs, not his owne merites, but the promises giuen of God; and by David firmly receyued in all afflictions. Such a David the Papistes doe not know: and because they know but onely the actiue & the working David, therefore they make of him nothing else but a plaine idol. They know not that he is holy, as the whole Church is holy: not because it hath good workes and merites, but because it hath the promise of grace, which is the true bosome and wombe wherein the Church is caried, and all the faithfull.

Verse. 2. VWho swaue vnto the Lord, and vowed vnto the God of Iacob, saying:

It seemeth that these wordes may not vncluely be applyed vnto Salomon as the author of the Psalm. For thus he sayth in effect: Thou hast promised vnto Dauid the kingdom. Dauid againe promised to build vnto thee a temple. This vow is now performed and accomplished: Do thou also now O Lord, performe thy promise, and be thou present in this place and with this people. Thus he offereth the temple and the Arke to the Lord in the faith of the promise made vnto Dauid concerning the light which should neuer be put out, and desireth that this promise may be kept. As touching this vow of Dauid the Scripture speaketh nothing: but maketh mention of that talke and consultation only, which he had with the Prophet Nathan. 2. Reg. 6. But the author of this Psalm

The vow of
David.

goeth about to commend and set forth the good will of David by the name of a house, because he had determined with himself thus to declare his thankfulness and to testify his faith in the promise of God.

Mightie in
Jacob.

Where the interpreters haue translated : the God of Jacob, it is in the hebrew : the mightie in Jacob. Which name is sometimes attributed vnto the Angells, and sometimes it is also applied to other thinges wherein is great strength and fortitude, as to a Lyon, an oxe and such like. But here it is a singular word of faith, signifying that God is the power and strength of his people. For onely faith ascribeth this vnto God. Reason and the flesh doe attribute, moze to riches and such other worldly helpes as it seeth and knoweth. But all such carnall helpes are very dolls, which deceiue men and draw them to perdition. But this is the strength and fortitude of the people, to haue God present with them. This strength and this power preserved the Jewish people, as a liell handfull, in the middes of all their enemies. Whereouer, this name is attributed vnto God, to this end, that we should vnderstand that it is he alone which giueth strength and victorie. So the Scripture sayth in an other place : Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lorde. Likewise Paule sayth : Be strong in the Lord & in the power of his might. For this power is eternall and deceiueth not. All other powers are not onely deceitfull, but they are also transitorie and continue but a moment.

Psal. 19.

Ephes. 6. 10.

Verse. 3. I will not enter into the Tabernacle of my house nor come vpon my pallet or bedde,

Verse. 4. Nor suffer myne eyes to sleepe, nor myne eye liidde to lumber,

Verse. 5. Vntill I haue found out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the God of Jacob.

This plenty of words is vsed of 3 Hebrewees when they woulde expresse any great or earnest desire. Notwithstanding all that is herein conteyned we may briefly compile in these few wordes : I will not rest vntill I haue founde out an habitation for the Lorde.

And

And here we neede not to answer that childish question, how this
 arch could stand, since that David did not him selfe build the tem-
 ple: And againe, if he had builded it, yet he must needs often
 times haue gone to his bedde & slepe, before the worke could haue
 bene finished. For he speaketh here of the good will and earnest
 desire which David had to finish this worke: and the good will
 of minde of the workeman comprehendeth all: as if the worke
 were fully accomplished. Therefore, where as David (as it ap-
 peareth in the booke of the Kinges) thought it a dishonour vnto
 the Lord, that the Arke shoulde remayne in a Tabernacle co-
 uered with skinner, when he him selfe did dwell in a house build-
 ed with Cedar trees, the manner of speech here sheweth declare
 that great desire he had to take away this dishonour and reppoche
 from God.

Howeuer, ye must here againe note, that when he speaketh of
 the Tabernacle of the mightie in Iacob, the holy fathers did not
 simply seeke of worship God dwelling in heauen: but they sought
 him and worshipped him as he was to be comprehended & founde
 in one certeine place, and, as ye would say, clothed with a certaine
 person. For God of his owne nature is infinite, and therefore can
 not simply be comprehended by mans imaginations. David there-
 fore looketh vnto the word, whereby God did bind him selfe vnto
 the Arke, & when he went about to place the Arke in the temple,
 he called the temple the tabernacle of habitation of the God of Ia-
 cob. Reason can not see how God, which is infinite and vnsearch-
 able, should be worshipped rather in this place then in any other.
 But the spirituall eyes of David, Salomon, and other holy men
 following the word, did seeke and worship God in that place on-
 ly, where, by his word he had reueiled, that he would be founde.
 They which offered in that place, were sayd to offer before the
 Lord. They which worshipped there, were sayd to worship be-
 fore the Lord. So Adam, Abraham, Iacob had their Altars where
 God did reueile him selfe, and with a signe from heauen did testi-
 fie that he was there present with them: For seeing that no man
 can auoyd the sinne of Idolatrie, if God him selfe do not shew both
 the place where, and the manner how he will be worshipped: there-
 fore there was a certeine place limited vnto the faithfull; where
 God had promised that he would be present with them, would
 heare them, speake vnto them, &c. We now haue no corporall

The taber-
 nacle of
 God.

It should
 be noted
 that

place: but all things are in Christ. Vppon him onely must our eyes and hartes be fixed. He alone is the God of our worship: So that we may truly say: Without this man Iesus there is no God: Who so apprehendeth him by faith, he it is that hath God in deede: but he that apprehendeth him not, hath no God. *Verse 6.* Loe, we heard of it in Ephrata, and founde it in the

fields of the forest. *That is to say,* the towne of David is now accomplished: For now God is said to dwell in this temple builded by Salomon; which is such a one, as shall not be caried into other places as it was afore. Sometimes it was in Gilgal, sometimes in Silo, and at the last in Gabaa. And where so euer the Arke was, there was God also: for the promise followed the Arke where so euer it was. Nowe (sayth he) the place where the temple is builded and the Arke shall rest, is stable and permanent: which if it be not verified of this place, it shall be verified of no place in the whole world.

But what meaneth it when he sayth in Ephrata? For we doe not and where reade, that the house of the Lord was in Ephrata; that is, in Bethleem. Although therefore this figure and manner of speech seemeth to be somewhat hard, yet certeyne it is, that by Ephrata is vnderstand the kingdom of Iuda, whereof David being an Ephratite, was King and gouernour: So that it is all one to say, in Ephrata and in Ierusalem, to the which David the Ephratite did translate the seate and throne of the King. Of the King therefore, which was an Ephratite, by a figure called Metonymia, Ierusalem is called Ephrata. Which manner of speech we likewise in the Dutch tongue doe oftentimes vse. As if I should say: Saxonie did boldly and freely confesse Christ at August before the Emperour and the whole empire. Here by Saxonie is signified the noble Prince and worthy of perpetuall memorie in all Churches, Iohn the Elector of Saxonie, who was by birth a Saxon. This figure the Prophet vseth in this place, to the ende we should vnderstand that the temple is exalted & magnified; not because of Salomon which builded the temple; nor because of the people which resorted thither; but because of David hauing the promise, and to whom the promise was made. For, (as I sayd before)

Ephrata signifies the kingdom of Iuda.

foze) the promise is that which principally must be considered in all things. This promise alone therefore it is, which here he be- holdeth, signifying that the temple is given for the promise sake, and not in respect of merites or deserts.

Where he addeth: In the fieldes of the forest, this is a repetition of that he said before. For the fieldes of the forest he calleth Jerusalem, as the Prophets oftentimes call it Libanus, because it is builded of the Ceders of Libanus: as though the trees & tymber of all Libanus were translated to Jerusalem. The former appellation therefore, where he calleth Jerusalem Ephrata, is taken of the person of David, and this is taken of the matter wherof the temple was builded. Now, these kindes of speech serue to this end that we should knowe what an inestimable gift it is to haue a place wherethe word of God may be taught. For there the church, that is to say, the kingdom of God is preserved and maintained. Such a place (saith he) haue we here, where by the promise of God the temple is builded. For here we heare the word, here God speaketh vnto vs, here we pray, and here we doe all thinges which pertaine to the seruice and worship of God, here the deuill, with all his assaults, his subtilties, his furies and his lyes, wherewith he goeth about to trouble and vex the Church, and to hinder the glory of God, are ouercome.

The fieldes
of the forest.

Vers. 7. VVe wil enter into his tabernacle and worship before his footestool.

These wordes doe plainly shew that he speaketh of Jerusalem: For he maketh rehearfall of those thinges which came to passe after Dauids time when the bow was fulfilled which he had bowed. This is therefore a voice of gratulation, containing also an exhortation. As if he should say: Since we haue a place for the word of God appointed and assured vnto vs by God him self, why doe we stay? why do we not go thither to heare the word, to pray, to giue thanks, to set forth the mercy and goodnes of the Lord? For these are in a maner the things which we must doe in the house of God in the temple; To worship, signifieth a kind of gesture or motion of the body which we are wont to vse when we pray, as to bowe our selves, to turne our face, and to lift up our eyes vnto the Lord.

To worship

Before his footestool, is as much to say, as before his mercie seat.

R ii.

of the Arke, where God promised that he would dwell. Nowe, wheresoeuer the word is, there is also the footstoolle, the habitation, the resting place, and the altar of God. Likewyse by the word the Prophetes doe signifie that God is present: as contrariwise where the word is not, there God is not present, and so are we as sheepe in the desert without a shepheard.

Vers. 8. Arise O Lord, to come into thy rest, thou and the arke of thy strength.

Here againe he calleth the place appoynted for the word, the rest, the tabernacle, the habitation of the Lord, according to that saying of our Saviour Christ: We will come vnto him & will dwell with him. And this is a prayer following vpon the former verses. As if he said: the temple is builded, and now we place the Arke therein. Arise therefore O Lord, and come to thy rest, that thou mayst dwell with vs. For this is thy rest, which wilt be worshipped in a certaine place and after a certaine maner. Wherefore diuerse kindes of worship and diuersitie of opinions after the inuentions of men, doe not please thee. Thou art in deede the God of heauen, and heauen is thy choyse: but yet thou wilt be worshipped of vs. Thou wouldest haue vs to knowe that thou dwellest in this place, and that we shoulde seeke thee here and not elsewhere.

It seemeth an absurde and a foolish thinge in the hartes of the worldly wise, to bind God to this place, and to enclose him in this darke Sanctuary, as though he would be worshipped no where else. So the Gentiles rounde about, to whome the religion of the Jewes was knowne, were maruelously offended that the infinite and incomprehensible nature of God should thus be shut vpp in a corner. But God doth not onely condemne, but also condemne the imaginations of men, and commaundeth vs to thinke no otherwise of God, then he prescribeth vnto vs in his worde. Wherefore (saith he) I shall put a memoriall of my name, there will I be. As if he sayde: I knowe that this place is to litle to receaue me, to holde me, whome heauen can not holde. Yea in respect of my person, I need no place: But thou for thy salvation hast neede that such a place there should be, where thou mayst

*V*Why God
did choose a
certain place

terue me, finde me, heare my word, receiue my blessing, &c. This

(I say) thy necessitie requireth, lest that, if I should not appoynt such a place vnto thee, the deuill should deceiue thee: When thou thinkest thy selfe to serue and worship me, thou shouldest serue and worship Satan him self. This daunger moueth me to limit a certaine place wherein may remaine a memorie of my name.

where he
would be
worshipped.

The Arke was but a coppozall thing; like as our temples haue a matter, as timber and stone, whereof they are builded. But because God by his worde had bound his presence to this coppozall place, therefore it was now the true habitation of God. So we know that the word is incarnate and become flesh. The boode of Christ therfore of the flesh of Christ is a true body and true flesh, and his humanitie is a true humanitie. But in this flesh, in this boode and in this humanitie God is set forth vnto vs as in a certaine myrrour or a glasse. In this flesh God so appeareth vnto vs, that out of this flesh he neither will be worshipped, nor can be knowne. We therfore doe also worship before that Arke which is now, before our Mercies seat, euen the man Christ: and we beleue that they which serue & honour God out of this Mercies seat, doe sinne: and are idolaters, as they which at that time sought Gods would worship him any where else then in the temple, his sinne and were Idolaters.

The Arke
was the ha-
bitation of
God.

Wherefore the faithfull, euen when they were not at Ierusalem; in prayer turned their faces towards Ierusalem: Like as now the Church, though it be dispersed throughout the world, accoyneth in this notwithstanding, that it prayeth in the name of Iesus, vpon whose passion and merites it wholly releeueth; and so by such an Christ is but one Church. Wherefore we must diligently marke those sentences of the Scripture which, as this manner blips God to one certaine place: for they arine vs against all manner of worship which was not done in that place of the Tabernacle, was Idolatrie: So the Patriarkes were able to iudge of the Altars which they made in those places where God appeared vnto them. For there might not be one temple erected against another, nor one altar against another: but there was one temple, one Arke, one altar and no more: Like as we haue one Christ in whom God dwelleth and in whom he is found.

Therefore by an excellent name and title he calleth it the Arke

The Arke of
strength.

R. iii.

This power
standeth
chiefly in
preaching
the word.
Read that
which fol-
loweth in
the same
Psalme.

Christ our
propitiatorie
and mercie-
seat.

Daniel. 3. 10.

of strength, that is to say, of the kingdom. Likewise he sayth; Psal. 110. The Lord shall send the scepter or rodde of thy power out of Sion. Also, Psal. 8. Out of the mouthes of babes and sucklings hast thou ordeyned strength. So is that called the Arke of strength, where God mightely reigherh, where he helpeth and defendeth his people, where he exerciseth his power for their succour and safety, in bearing them, in forgiving their sinnes, in comfortyng them against Satan, death, and hell it selfe. This diuine power (sayth he) is bound to this Arke, and therefore it is truly called the Arke of strength. This strength and this power was also bound to the Altars of the fathers: but now it is bound to the man bozne of the virgine Marie. To this man who so euer cometh, shall seele a diuine power. If he dye, he shall finde life: If his conscience be oppressed wth sinne, he shall finde remission of sinnes: If he be tormented of Satan, he shall finde peace: If he be deuyed of the world, he shall finde securitie and victorie. For Christ, whose kingdom it is, both not therefore reigne, that he may enrich vs with worldly goods, landes and possessions (for these are promysed vnto vs in the first of Genesis): but that he may set forth his diuine power and rich mercie, and let vs free from those calamities, out of the which we are not able to redeme our selues: Like as he deliuered the faithfull in those dayes from all dangers. For the Arke was vnto them as an heauen, where they found deliuerance from all miseries: as the people was the kingdom, and the faithfull were the starres of heauen. Therefore Daniel sayth of Antiochus, that he should cast downe starres to the ground. For whereso euer the word of God is, there is the kingdom of God, of heauen, of life, of victorie ouer death, sinne and all miseries. Thus ought the word which of the world is contemned and despised, to be exalted and magnified.

Forse. 9. Let thy Priestes be clothed with righteousnes, and let thy Saintes reioyce.

This petition is the same which we vse in our preachings, when we desire that the Lorde would giue vnto vs godly & faithfull ministers of the worde, and suffer no euill teachers to haue place among vs. For God in his kingdome is like vnto an Emperour. Wherefore as the noble men and chiefe Magistrates are Mini-
sters

sters into the Emperour and are the principall part of his kingdom: so in the kingdom of Christ are the Angels of peace or the ministers of the Gospel. They therefore which pray for the kingdom of God must needs pray that the Lord would giue faithful Pastours and Ministers, as he him selfe commaundeth saying: The harvest is great: Pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. The labour and travell of these workmen is, to communicate doctrine, consolation, threatenings, &c. and to minister the Sacramentes. That these things may be rightly done, the labourers must needs be clothed with righteousness, and not onely with that righteousness which belongeth to every man, and is not without corruption: but specially with that righteousness which belongeth to the ministry and to the worke, which is pure and without all corruption. This is that righteousness whereby the kingdom of Christ is governed, that is to say, the word and the Sacramentes.

Math. 9.

The righteousness of the person is neuer without corruption.

Whereouer the Pastours and Ministers of the word are then clothed with righteousness, when they execute a righteous office: that is, when they teach the word sincerely, as Peter saith: If any man speake, let him speake as the wordes of God. Also, when they minister the Sacramentes purely and without corruption: so that whatsoever they doe or speake, be either the word or the worke of God. So he that baptiseth doth no worke of his owne: but he baptiseth in the power of God. Likewise he that comforteth the afflicted conscience, doth it not of him selfe, but by the direction of the worde and will of God. Therefore he also that heareth this worde, must not take it as the worde of a man, but as a voyce sounding from heauen. So the ministry is righteous which is truly executed in the power of God: and this is true righteousness.

The righteousness of the ministry is vncorrupt. 1. Pet. 4.

Contrariwise, they which teach men to trust to their owne merits, works and worthines, and prescribe a certaine forme of apparell, of eating, of fasting and such like (wherein all the righteousness of the Papistes and the Turkes doth consist): such Priests (I say) are clothed with iniquitie. For they haue lost the chiefe ornament and the true apparell of their ministry, because they doe not teach rightly nor gouerne truly, but seduce men rather with a false shew of their government & ministry, and that by the malice & motion of Satan, which hateth this heauenly ministry and

The Ministers of the Pope are clothed with iniquitie.

R. lili.

peruerteth the ministers.

The fruites
of the mini-
stry.

The summe and effect therefore of this prayer is, that they which attend vpon the Arke of strength may gouern righteously: that religion may continue and flourish: that the word may be effectually and bring forth fruite: that terrified and afflicted consciences may be rayled by and comforted: that secure, profane and presumptuous persons may be beaten downe with threatnings and the terror of Gods wrath: that the weake may be strengthened: that the simple and ignorant may be instructed: Which thinges by the grace of Christe are diligently and faithfully done in our Church.

God requi-
reth not a
heavy, but a
cheerfull
hart.

And let thy Sainctes reioyce. Here we see that God is not delited with the heauines, vniquietnes and vexation of conscience; which sinne and the feare which naturally followeth sinne, is wont to bring: but with a cheerful hart. Seeing therefore that there be two kingdomes, namely the kingdom of death and the kingdom of life, of the kingdom of hell and of heauen, he desireth here that the faithfull may be kept in the kingdom of life, & enjoy the peace and comfort of conscience, which the righteous ministry of the Pastors and Preachers of the word bringeth. With this prayer agreeth that prayer of the Apostles wherewith they begin their Epistles: Grace be with you, and peace from God the father, &c. Grace is the remission of sinnes. After this grace followeth peace of a good conscience, which here he calleth a reioycing. Let thy Sainctes reioyce (saith he): that is, let thy people, together with the Pastors and Ministers, hearing the word of the righteous ministry, be ioyfull & triumph in that word. He calleth them Sainctes or holy because of the vse of the word and the ministry which are holy. So the Jewes are called holy, because (as before I haue said) there were emonges that people which had the arke and the word of God, which were holy thinges in deede, and did sanctifie and make men holy. So our Church is called holy, not onely for the holines of the persons, but rather for holines which the word and Sacraments doe bring vnto those whiche vse them rightly. To those he wisheth ioy and gladnes, and that they may reioyce and be mery in the Lord.

The Church
is holy.

The meaning then of this clause is this, that Christ Iesus our King hath giuen vnto vs his word, hath commaunded vs to be baptised, to vse the Sacrament of his body and blood, not because he

would

would destroy vs, oppresse vs with sorrow, and bring vs to desperation: but to this end, that we should reioyce and be merry, hauing peace and a good conscience by his free grace and mercie. The kingdom of Christ therefore is the kingdom of ioy and helpeurance (as another Psalm saith) in the tabernacles of the righteous: that is, in the Church and among the faithful it is the voice of reioycing: for they knowe that Christ their King would that they should haue comfort, life and victorie against death and Satan. This is then the reioycing & triumph of Christians, or (as here he calleth them) of the Saints. Why then should a Christian be heauy or sorrowfull, since that he is called into the kingdom of Christ and of grace, baptised and nourished with the body and blood of Christ, and daily rapled by by the word, against desperation and all terrours? If I then doe yet remaine in bitterness and heauines of spirit, the fault is not in this kingdom, nor in the word or Sacraments, but in me and in the deuil, because I doe not with a true faith lay hold vpon the word and thowoly beleue it. For why should I feare, if I did heretofore beleue that I am baptised, called, made partaker of the body and blood of Christ, and so receiued into the kingdom of life, comprehended of grace (as Paul

The kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of peace and ioy.

Psal. 117. 15.

Phil. 3. 12.

speake) and that under the mercie of God? These are nothing else therefore but the subtil sleights and deceits of Satan, which will not suffer vs to see our inestimable riches and glorie, but counterfeith tentations and crosses where no crosse is, but health and victorie.

Wherefore it was well said of that Christian virgine, who being tempted of Satan, answered that she was a Christian, and so rested wholly in that man Christ. For we may not reason muche with Satan. If he object vnto thee thy sinnes, it shal suffice if thou object vnto him againe thy baptisme, which he can not deny: Also if thou lay against him the word, whereby thou wast called into this kingdom of grace; which, for as much as it is the word of God, how can it deceiue thee? Thus in a Christian heauines can take no place, if in his hart he doe acknowledge baptisme, the word, the communion of the body and blood of Christ, the grace, the fauour, and the mercie of God. How can he then but reioyce and be glad? But because we often times suffer the word, and these gifts of God to be taken from vs, and turne our eyes an other way, it can not be, but that heauines and terror must needs follow. And this

How poore afflicted consciences must be comforted against Satan and all terrours.

Psal. 42. 6.

cometh to passe by the faulte, partly of our selues (as I haue
saide) and partly of Satan, who leadeth vs from the word befoze
we be ware, and maketh vs to thinke of our owne wozthynges or
vnwozthynges, of our good or euill desertes: also of the terroz of
death, of the tormentes of hell, &c. When we thinke of these things,
if we lay not hold vppon Christ, we perish and are swallowed vp
with anguish and sorowe: for this is to lose the Arke of the co-
uenant. They therefore which in these daungers take holde a-
gayne of the word, are safe, and are now able to say with Dauid:
VVhy art thou cast downe, O my soule, and why arte thou vn-
quiet within me? For I am nowe in the kingdome of Christe,
that is, in the kingdome of peace, of ioy and eternall reioycing: sa-
uuinge backe it is bindyd by the deuill and by our owne sinnes, which
is moze ready to beholde her owne sinnes and vnwozthynges, then
baptisme, the word and the swete promises of God. And this is
the wisdom, yea the payson which is hidde in our flesh, that we
are moze moued with our owne uncleannes, then with the pure-
nes of the word and the Sacramentes. They then whiche rest in
the word, are in a sure haue of safegarde from all these tempests
and terrours. We must pray therefore that God would giue vs
good Pastors, faithfull, wise and godly disposers of the word of
God. For by their meanes and ministry the Church doeth
enioy this inestimable benefite and blessing, whereby it trium-
pheth ouer death, sinne and the deuill. For it knoweth that it is
nowe in the kingdome of grace. This is true and perfect peace,
namely the peace of the hart and conscience. Thus the Prophet
desireth (as an inestimable gifte) that the pastors and Ministers
of the word may be clothed with righteounes, and then that the
people also may reioyce. This is the firste parte of this psalme.
Now followeth the seconde parte.

Verse. 10. For thy seruauant Dauids sake, refuse not the face of
thine annoynted.

This is a newe prayer, which he maketh in the trust and confi-
dence which he hath in the promises. For here (as also befoze)
the name of Dauid doeth not properly signifie the substance, but
the qualitie of Dauid, that is to say, Dauid clothed and adorned
with

with the promises of the kingdom. As if he sayd: O Lord, I beseech thee, preserve and bleſſe our kingdom: be thou present with vs: be thou our shield and our defence. And this I doe desire, not for myne owne cause onely, as though there were any worthines in me whereſoever thou shouldst graunt me this petition: but I desire it in the trust of thy promises which thou madest unto my father David, when thou saydest that thou wouldest give, a light unto the house of David, &c. And here have we both an example and doctrine set before vs, that we also, when we pray unto god, should looke specially unto the promises, as we have sayde formerly in this heretofore.

Whereover this place admonisheth vs of the difference which is betwene the spirituall & the corporall promises. For the corporall promises have a condition as touching our workes, tyned unto them. So the corporall kingdom was promised to David with this condition: If his posteritie should continue in the word & the will of the Lord, as in Moses it hath appeare. But the spirituall promises are grounded upon no condition of mens workes, but upon the only mercy & truth of the Lord. Therefore, although the people of Israel were depriued of the kingdom & driven out of their land, yet notwithstanding the promise as touching the seede of Abraham, was not taken from them. For thus sayth the text: Although I cast them out & visit them with scourges, yet my mercy I will not take from the. Likewise Eſay sayth a God shall make the consumption which he hath determined in the whole land. That is to say, God shall consume and destroy the people for their sinnes, & yet for his own mercies sake he will preserve a remnant, out of the which shall rise a new people & a new church. So the promise in this place made unto the house of David, is conditionall, as he ende declareth in that the whole kingdom is destroyed. Notwithstanding this is also true which an Angel saith he shall sit upon the throne of David forever. This contradiction can never be reconciled unlesse we make such a difference of the promises of God. And hereof riseth all the error of the Jewes that they know not this difference. They see great and ample promises concerning their land & their kingdom: but they see not that they are conditionall. And againe: all those things which are promised as concerning the spirituall kingdome, they apply to the corporall kingdom. Whereof it cometh that they glory so much and conceale so

He maketh mention here of David because of the promises which were made unto David.

The promises are of two sortes, legall or conditionall, and spirituall.

2. King. 7. 15.

Eſay. 10. 23.

The error of the Jewes in that they see not the promises as touching their corporall kingdom to be conditionall.

great hope that their kingdom shall be restored. But it is an eagle matter to judge how foolishly they are deceived. But we will return unto the Psalm.

The cause why he maketh mention of Dauid, we haue declared to be the promises made vnto Dauid, for the which he desireth of God that he will not turne away the face of his anoynted, that is to say, of the King, which was anoynted by the word a comman- dement of God. From the face of the anoynted he calleth the pre- sence of the King, of the kingdom giuen and ordeyned of God. As if he say: *Preserue O Lord, thy people: mainteine the iustice, the iudgements, the equitie, the whole politike gouernment of this kingdom, that all thinges may be done in due order: so that publike peace be not troubled by sedition and ciuill discorde; that discipline be not defaced and deformented by adulteries and other offences: For these things and such like doe pertain to this King- dom. For to enioy a kingdom, is not to enioy a crowne or a scepter, but a godly ordered common wealth, in the which innocent may safely dwell, and contrariwise sinne and wickednes may be lawfully punished.* All these thinges he prayeth for when he desir- eth that the face of the anoynted may not be turned away.

Some the cause why he saith, these things are, for that this people had the moyn of the Church of God embroged them, which can not prosper and flourish, where all is full of murder, adultery, warre and contempt of lawes. So Paule likewise exhorteth us to pray for Kings and Princes, that we may leade a peaceable and a quiet life. To this prayer we owe all that good that we behold we have charge. Altho when we do wickedly accuse us as troubleers of the publicke peace. I am verely perswaded that if peace and quietnes be maintained by any means, it is specially by the prayers of our Church. For though the cause be hard to play, what should God give vnto this church, but the perfecting of his word, which are in these times in ignorance of his true prayer (as of home) the ought to pray.

Psalm 70 The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; & he will not forsake it from him saying, Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. He shall be as many one, like unto thee great God of gods, ever good blessing all day long.

The are entered (as if have sayne) into the second parte of the psalms.

Psalme, in the whiche hee prayeth for the policke of temporall kingdome. For these two kingdoms, namely the policke and the spirituall kingdome, although they be farre unlike, yet are they so ioynd together, that the one can not stand without the other. For where politike peace is lacking, there can no pietie or godlines be maintained without great daungers. Again, where the word of God is not, there can be no ende of errors, blasphemies and other impieties. Prayer therefore for politike peace and the common wealch is necessary. Now, when the wojs is ioynd withall, the greater cause we haue to giue thanks vnto God. And this prayer (as I haue said) is also grounded vpon a promise of God. For in prayer we must aske nothing, but that wee are certainly perswaded we may or ought to pray for, or may be obtayned. Now, that we may be certaine how to pray & what to aske, there is not onely a commaundement as touching prayer set forth vnto vs, but also a certaine forme of prayer, and the very words wherby we are taught how to pray and what we should pray for: and in yeaueour certaine causes expyelled, for the which we may be assured that our prayer pleaseth God: As when we pray for the sanctifying of the name of God, the comming of his kingdome, &c. And here is also to be noted, that this promise is confirmed with an othe, that it might be the more sure and ceredne.

This promise as touching the temporall kingdome, was it so great, so was it an occasion to many holy Prophets, of great affliction and cruel death. For as the promises of God in the righte vse doe raise vp and comfort afflicted and godly mindes: so by occasion thereof secure and prophane spirits were proud & presumptuous, and through the confidence they haue in these promises, they afterwards persecute the godly: as we may see by manifest examples in the Prophets: who, because they reprobated the idolatries of the Kings and condemned their false and damnable worshippings, threatening the destruction of the kingdome and of the people, vnlesse they would forsake their abominations & turne vnto the Lord, were to ymmed and put to death as heretikes, for that they seemed to speake against this and other promises. And in deede this seemed to be an inuincible argument whiche they vsed against the Prophets: If God (said they) haue promised that the sonnes of David should sit vpon the throne of David for euer, it is impossible that the King should commit any such offence, for

Policie serueth the Church, and the Church preferreth policie.

The wicked presume of the promises of God, and cruelly persecute the true church.

The argument which the wicked vsed against the Prophets

the which the kingdome should be destroyed. *How the Pope hath abused the promises of God.* The kingdome of the Pope hath not so goodly and so glorious apperance; and yet doth he also abuse the promises of Christ in the vianer, to establish his tyranny, his idolatrie and abominations. How doth he bragge of this promise of Christ when he saith: I will be with you vnto the ende of the worlde? As though this pertained to the establishing of the Popes tyranny. So that sweete consolation: The gates of hell shall not preuaile, &c. afterwards became bloody and cruel; and was an occasion of death and destruction of many Saintes; for that the Pope vsd apply it vnto him selfe; and abused it for the stablishing of his tyrannicall kingdome. For this was the only argument whereby they proued that the Pope being the head of the Church, could not erre. Thus the wicked doe abuse the promises (which God hath set forth to raise by the afflicted minds and consciences of his people) against the true Church. This was proued by Amasia the priest could not abide Amos the Prophet. In the middes of thy house (saith he) Amos hath conspired against thee: The earth could not beare his stinke: For thus he saith: Iacob shall dye by the sword; and Israel shall be ledde away captiue out of their owne lande. As though this had bene a thing impossible; and that the King might commit wickednes and do what he list without checke or punishment. Notwithstanding the ende afterwards declared that this was a haire conuenge, and that the prophet had said truly. Thus the wicked do abuse the promises of God; applying the same vnto them selves; whereas they belong to the true Church onely; and so they become presumptuous and careless. They think not of their finnes or of the iudgement of God: but boldly & without all feare doe persecute the Saintes of God; as we see at this day in the papacie. So the true church is oppressed of tyrannes, oppugned of false brethren; suffereth the contempt and hatred of the world, and in outward apperance is every hower ready to perishe. Here it is necessary that the godly should raise by them selves with a trust in the mercies and promises of God: for to this ende the promises are set forth. But they which should beleue and comfort them selves with these promises, doe it not: For the infirmities of the flesh will not suffer them: which Satan also encreaseth in setting before their eyes their great daungers and terrors. Contrarywise the Church of the wicked; whiche for their finnes ought

Amos 7.

How the Pope hath abused the promises of God.
The godly
can not so
raise vp and
comfort the
selues with
the promi-
ses, as the
wicked doe.

people to feare and tremble, and to hope, and to trust in great
travels and without all feare. So the Pope boldly said that pro-
mise which he which our Saviour Christ promised by his Disciples
when he sayth: I will be with you alway unto the ende of the
world, perswading him selfe that Peters waite; though it may be
travelling, shall never be broken. But by crucible, so forth
only the things are spoken, not as so beleeving in the promise
by it selfe with a trust and confidence in the promise as it should
doe. Christ at all times and ages the condition of the true Church
hath bene alwayes one. Now, like as I which live in great hope,
and comfort them selves marvellously so long as they are in the
specie; so when they are touched with adversities, they shoulde
forsooke it payre. But the godly continue and constantly remaine in
hope and comfort in all troubles and calamities.

With this
word
and
blow
of
the
cross
Mark. 16. 10

The godly
in perils and
afflictions
rest vpon
hope, when
the wicked
doe despaire.

So this promise as touching the kingdom of Christ, was hin-
dered many and sundry wayes, by rebellious people, by enemies
and wicked Kinges, until at the last the citie and the temple were
destroyed, the people carried away captiue; and none left but plow-
men and such as were of the least sort. From the world, the more
king and service of God; the accustomed in gathering, and by itselfe
the Church, the policie, and the kingdom were gone. Here what
hope we left, that there should remaine any possorite into Da-
uid, as this psalme here promiseth. This promise therefore was
necessarie, that thereby the godly might be able to comfort their
selues, that it was impossible for this kingdom to fall, before
Christ the true seede of David shoulde be crucified. Wherefore
when all things seemed to be most desperate, God raised up cer-
taine notable Prophets. He see by David also amonges great
and mighty Princes. Moreover, the time was appoynted by the
Prophet Jeremy, namely 70 yeares, after the which they shoulde
returne into their land. The remnant of the royall stocke, that is
to say, of David, was preserved even in captiuitie. Thus, although
the kingdom seemed in outward shewe to be utterly forsaken; yet
was it not forsaken, and the godly constantly continued in hope of
deliverance, when the wicked despayred and miserably perished.

How much
it was
the
word
of
the
cross
Mark. 16. 10

In like manner doe we beleue and comfort our selues at this
day that Christ will defend and mainteine his kingdom and his
Church even to the end of the world; though the Romish Antichrist
triumph neuer so much, sitting in the temple of God, and exerci-

The promi-
ses are set
forth for the
comfort of
the godly, that

in their afflictions they should not despayre.

2. Cor. 1. 8.

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King his yoke as though he would utterly oppress it. **Church?** For these promises God hath with his Church, that in such necessities and dangers it should not be without comfort. Which promises, albeit the Church can not fully and perfectly beleue, yet surely it not deny by reject the same: And Christ accepteth and commendeth our faith; although it be in more then a grasp of mustard seed. This to knowe & this to teach, it is necessary. For the time will come (if we be not prevented by the trespasse) when he will by his ministers, with might and maine will attempt all means he can to quench the doctrine of the Gospel. Here, although we also shall see the kingdom brought into captiuitie, and the Arke carried cleane away, as the Jewes did; yet much we trust that God will giue us prophesies, and that his Church (although it seeme to be utterly forsaken) he will neuer for forsake. For of Gods whole promise we haue, ought to make vs more then the present danger, feare it neuer so terrible. For if God, through much patience did preserve his Church vnder the papacie: if he suffered many abuses, which blind guides and wicked teachers brought into the Church, if at the length, when all things were desperate and past all hope, he raised the light of his word to shine in the middes of most horrible darkenes: why should we despayre? The mercie of Gods greater then heauen and earth, & is able to sublate by alterations, into the which the very elect, by false prophets, blind teachers and the iniquitie of some are often times ledde.

There is no man which would not wish for peace and quietnes in the commonwealth, and in the people obedience and godlines.

The Church is neuer with out dangers and afflictions, and therefore it hath neede of the promises.

So is it to be wished that in the Church there might be vnitie and concord; and that there might be no offence either in doctrine or life, that princes and Magistrates would not hate or persecute, but like, loue & embrace the word. Notwithstanding such a commonwealth and such a Church may well be payned out of a cunning artificer, but in this world they could neuer yet be founde. Therefore let vs not looke to see the face either of such a quiet commonwealth, or of so pure a Church. But rather let vs content our selues, that the Church and commonwealth, although they are not without great troubles and dangers, yet God hath vouchsafed that there is some maine in the commonwealth, and in the Church pure and sound doctrine: and that there are some which magnifie the word, use prayer, and frequent the Sacra-

can.

eraments, although the greater part doe the contrary. And to this end doe pertain these consolations, that whiles all things seeme to fall to wacke and ruine, we cast not away all hope and bitterly despayre.

When I behold the miserable face of the Church at this day, in that the Pastors and Preachers of the word are so neglected, yea so contemned and despised, thus I often thinke with my selfe, that the whole ministerie, although there were no tyrannes to oppresse it, must needs fall euen of it self. But we must more regard the promise of God, then all outward shewes, seeme they vnto vs neuer so likely. For behold and consider the histories of all ages, and you shall see that the Church hath bene alwayes oppressed & hidden through the tyranny of Princes, and through the lies and sleanders of heretiks. Howeouer, & godly haue neuer bene without their tentations through the consideration of their sinnes and vexations of the deull. These things he that beholderth, and still fixeth his eyes vpon these euills, shall thinke that there is no church nor yet any God at all. But of such shewes and outward appearances we must ground no iudgement. For such a face of & church ye shall neuer see, in the which great offences, infirmities, and, as it were great diseases are not to be found. In deede it were to be wished that these things were not in the Church, and that there were such a face and outward shew of the Church, as is described here & in other places, where it is compared to a bewtiful spouse, in whom appeareth neither spot nor wrinkle. But such a Church outwardly ye shall neuer see. For it is alwayes oppressed of Tyrannies, vexed of heretiks, exercised with afflictions both inwardly and outwardly, with disobedience, contempt, falsehood, dissimulation of false brethren, &c. In all these daungers we must holde fast this consolation, that the gates of hell shall not preuaile against it, and goe on forward with a ballant mind and Christian courage in teaching, in exhorting, in repprouing, and in other duties pertaining to the ministerie. If any be disobedient, peruerse and obstinate, let them goe, let them perish in their owne sinnes, and let this suffice, that there are some vnto whom Christ and the ministry of the Gospell is appoynted for their rising againe and their saluation.

The state of
the Church
at this day,
what it is.

Luke 21.

Thus did the holy Prophets which saw the captiuitie of Babylon to be enemy at hand, and that the temple and the citie shoulde



A consolati-
on for the
Church of
Israel in the
tyme of her
captiuitie.

be consumed with fire. This was then the face of the kingdome which should afterwards be destroyed for ever. There was nothing now therefore wherewith they might comfort them selues, but this and such like promises made vnto Dauid, that of þe frute of his body God would set vp the royall throne, & that euen with an oth he had confirmed the same. And this is in deede a singular promise, in that he nameth and pointeth out a certeine person, & suffereth not þe succession to wander in an vncerteine person. Abraham, Isaac and Iacob had also a promise concerning Christ, but vnder an vncerteine person if ye respect the multitude of their posterity. But in this promise is a certeine limitation, because there is one certeine person named, to the end, that although the people should be all leede away captiue, yet so long as the posteritie of Dauid did continue, they should comfort them selues with this hope, that the kingdome should neuer faile.

This I thinke to be the cause why the genealogies, that is, the line of the kinredes and progenies of this people were so diligently obserued and noted of the godly, that through this hope of the promise to be accomplished, the succession of the house of Dauid might be sure & certeine. For this familie was as a certeine starre emonges the people, of whose posteritie so long as they sawe any remnant, they continued in hope of their deliuerance by Christ, yea euen in the captiuitie of Babylon, although it were most horrible. For euen in this captiuitie, although they were without a kingdome, yet had they emonges them certeine persons of the royall stocke, as it were certeine sparkles of the kingdome and of the light of Dauid, vnto whom the eyes of þe godly did alwaies looke, as vnto a pledge of þe promise afterwards to be accomplished as touching Christ. For euen in this captiuitie they had the word of the Prophets, Daniel, Ieremy, Ezechiel, and (no doubt) many other. Now, so long as such persons as were appoynted to þe kingdome and the priesthood were yet remaining, the kingdome was not cleane forsaken or destroyed. Thirdly the number of the yeres was also limited, which being expired, their captiuitie shoulde haue an ende. But the Iewes at this day haue none of all these thinges. They haue no kingdome, no persons appoynted to the kingdome, no certeine number of yeres, neither yet the word of the Prophets. Therefore they are condemned with all theire religion. And this calamitie in the which the Iewes haue liued euer since

since Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romanes, is no captiuitie, but a generall destruction and desolation of that people for euer as Daniel also saith: And after this shall be the ende.

Vers. 12. If thy sonnes keepe my couenant and my testimonies that I shall teache them, their sonnes also shall sit vpon thy throne for euer.

This promise is not generall, for it hath a condition annexed vnto it. There is a difference therefore betwene this promise and such as be without condition, as are these: The Lord said vnto my Lord, &c. Againie Giue thy iudgements vnto the King, O Lord, There the kingdom is promised vnto Christ absolutely, but here it is not promised to the posteritie of Dauid but with this condition: If they shall keepe the couenant of the Lord. So the kingdom was promised and giuen vnto Salomon, but afterwards his stock was almost cleane cut of in Ahazia, when onely Ioas remained, & all the rest of the Kinges seede were slaine by Athalia. *Reg. 2. 11. 2. Chro. 22.* This was the practise of Satan, to the ende he might hinder the promise concerning Christ. Afterwardes the kingdom came vnto Ioas, who also was of the seede of Dauid, & was preserved by the meanes of his sister, so that he was not slaine of Athalia. Thus was the promise of the kingdome made vnto Dauid to endure for euer, but yet so that God threatneth destruction if they keepe not his couenant. So was the kingdom at the length also taken from the posteritie of Nathan and vsurped by Herode a stranger, until the time came that Christ vnder the reigne of wicked gouerners, was boyn of Mary the Bethlemite. Thus for some one posteritie was destroyed after an other by the malice of Satan, and yet the whole line and succession was preserved even vnto Mary.

To consider these things it is very profitable, namely how the kingdom promised vnto Dauid, came vnto his sonne Salomon, but yet for some it was taken from him againe. The same hapned vnto Nathan, & yet notwithstanding God reserued a little sparke, out of the which this kingdom should afterwards shine & mighte increase. And these things were done to hidde our presumption. Such is the promise also as touching *h church*: I wil be with you vnto the ende of the world. But here is a condition toynd withal, that is: If ye walk in my waies. For whose neglect *h world*, those

Matth. 3. 9.
Luke. 3. 8.

doth God also neglect and reiect, and reisset by others which shal be his Church. So saith our Sauour Christ: God is able of these stones to raise vp children vnto Abraham. For whereas the promise was made vnto Abraham, the Phariseis, because they were the children of Abraham, thought they shoulde vndoubtedly be heires of the promise. This confidence made them bold to liue carelesly and without all feare of God. Therefore, saith he, it is certaine that the children of Abraham shall be heires of the promises made vnto Abraham: but if ye will be carelesse and wil not obey the commaundement of God, I say vnto you, it is an easie thing for God to reiect you, and of the very stones to raise by a posteritie vnto Abraham. So this promise dependeth wholly vpon the condition, to humble and beate downe our presumption.

The couenant is the promise of mercie through Christ. The Testimonies are the will of God reueiled vnto all ages by Moses and the Prophets. Wherefore he requireth saith, and then obedience vnto the law. And here is to be noted that he addeth; VWhich I will teach them. For he will be the teacher and he wil be heard. He will not that the Councells shoulde be heard, or such as teach that he hath not taught. So we say also of the Church, that where so euer the promise of God is beleued and his word obeyed, there is the Church. But they that doe not beleue, bragge they of their glorious titles, their holy vocations, and such like, neuer so much, are reiect of God & no members of the Church. For who would beleue the Pope because he is the Pope? And yet for this onely cause he will be beleued: & no man may aske whether the thinges which he teacheth be true and sound: but he will haue men simply to beleue that that holy sea can not erre. Against this who so euer dare once open their mouthes or examine his decrees by the word of God, are prauene and haled to all kindes of tormentes. Like as therefore the Iewes taught and defended their errors and impieties by the authoritie of their Kinges vppon whome this promise seemed to be grounded: euen so in all ages is the false church wone to doe. But we answer that in deede the promise is true, and yet is it conditionall: namely, If ye keepe my couenant and my testimonies. For God did not so anoynt the Kinges, that they shoulde doe what so euer seemed good in their sight, or what so euer they ordained or taught, God would approue because they were kinges and the anoynted of God: but he addeth: If ye keepe my coue-

The Church
is y Church
vnder this
condition, if
it follow the
word.

The kinges of
Israel.

nant

nant. So in the newe Testament it is a true saying: He that heareth you heareth me: but yet not generally to be vnderstande of all those which teach in the Church. For some teach not the word of Christ, but their owne word. This word God willeth not to be heard, but commaundeth that it be not heard, when he sayth: Take heede of false prophets.

So Moses in Deuonomic commaundeth that the king should neuer lay the booke of the lawe out of his handes, but should exercise the same continually in reading, in learning and in practising the same. If this commaundement was giuen to the Kings vnder the law, what shall we then thinke of the word of the newe Testament? In daye shall the Pope and his Prelates here glozie and bragge of the Countells, the fathers, the Church, the dignitie which they haue so many yeares vsurped. All these are so farre to be appoynted and beleued, as they teach according to the rule of the holy Scripture. For the Church, which hath authoritie from God, is that onely and alone which followeth the doctee and the word of the Lord.

Howeouer, we learne by experience, that nothing is moze common amongst men, then to abuse the authoritie and power committed vnto them; & very few there be which doe rightly vse their authoritie either in the Church or in the common wealth. The cause is; for that the greater part serue their owne affections, their owne lustes and pleasures, and whiles they shoulde rule others, they suffer themselves to be ruled and gouerned of Satan. Hereof commeth it, that we see the Pope, the Bishops, yea the whole Papacie to haue no care of the word, nor loue to the word at all: but are wholly giuen ouer to seeke their owne glozie, dignitie, wealth and pleasure. Wherefore their authoritie hindereth not vs, although it were the authoritie of an Angell from heauen: but with good conscience we depart from them, lest we should be disobedient to the high authoritie and Potentie, which is God himselfe. But if the Pope with his Prelates would not resist and persecute the doctrine of Christ, if with vs they would beleue & teach that we are iustified by the onely price of the blood of Christ, and would not teach men to make merchandise of their owne merites and workes, we would gladly acknowledge their authoritie. But since they manifestly impugne the worde, since they defende their impieties and abominations with extreme crueltie and tyranny,

The commaundement giuen to the kings in the olde Testament.

Few vse their authoritie rightly.

Prophets

we doe not onely reiect and contemne their authoritie, but we say as Paule sayth, that they are accursed. It is a common principle amongst the popish Doctours, that the Pope is aboue the worde and the Scripture, and that in the name of God he may dispense as pleaseth him. But God giueth no authoritie vnto man aboue the word. So should he set man, that is to say, butt and dunge aboue himselfe for what is the word, but God him selfe? This word they that hono^r, obey and keepe, are the true Church in deede, be they neuer so contemptible in the world: but they which doe not, are the church of Satan and accursed of God. And this is the cause why it is expressly set downe in the text: The testimonies which I will teach them. For so will God be the ministerie of teachers and Pastors in the Church, that he notwithstanding will be the chiefe Pastor, and all other ministers and Pastors what so euer, yea the Church it selfe shall be ruled and gouerned by the word. Amongst the people of Israel the Kings and Priests glorying and vaunting of their vocation, though he they might doe what they list. So the Pope and his Prelates at this day will not be subiect to the authoritie and rule of the word & the Scripture. For the euill conscience which the Pope hath, will alway cry out and witnesse vnto him that the holy Scripture is the word of God, and therefore will be against him, & utterly condemne him. All herefore there is no pison which he more hateth and abhorreth then the word of God.

The condition is added because of the wicked & presumptuous.

This conditionall sentence is here set downe because of the wicked, that they should not take vpon them an absolute power contrary to y^e word. For there is no absolute promise, but that which pertaineth vnto Christ, which saith not with a certayne condition, but generally and absolutely, that Christ should come of the seede of Abraham. Nowe, whereas the corporall kingdom did endure vntill this promise as touching Christ was accomplished, it was so stablished by the word, that notwithstanding it had a certayne condition annexed vnto it. Therefore many wicked Kinges, with all their families neglecting this condition, were utterly destroyed, and others succeeded them: so that the temporall kingdom endured after a sort, vntill y^e most holy one, the King of Kings came, who hath continued this kingdom vntill this day, and shall doe so euer. This condition therefore is added to beate downe proud and presumptuous spirits. And if he say: This promise as touching Christ

Christ will I accomplish, and will undoubtedly establish the throne vnto my seruant Dauid: but doe not ye, whiche in the meane tyme sit in this throne and gouerne this kingdome, presume of the promise, and thinke that ye can not erre, or that God will wink at your errors, and not rather condemne and severely punish them. Therefore either gouerne your kingdome according to my word, or else I will roote you out and destroy you for euer. This promise he now amplifieth and setteth forth more at large.

Vers. 13. For the Lord hath chosen Sion, and loueth to dwell in it, saying:

This is an amplification of the promise. As if he saide: Ye haue my promise. But doe your indeuour, that ye may become righteous and keepe my couenant, shewing your selues obedient vnto my voice. Then shall this kingdome endure and I will dwell with you, and wil replenish you with all maner of blessings both corporal and spirituall.

Here, of a singular purpose he bleth the same word, which Moses bleth Deut. 16. 26. In the place which the Lord thy God shall choole to place his name there. For at the beginning there was no certaine place appointed wherein the tabernacle should remain, but it wandred, not onely from place to place, but also from tribe to tribe, as Ephraim, Manasse, Dan, &c. Whereouer by this word, hath chosen, he ouerthroweth all kindes of worship, and religion of mans owne deuising and choosing, whereof there was an infinite number among the Jewes. For thus they thought: If it be lawfull for the Priests to carry the tabernacle from one place to another, why may not we also sacrifice in moe places then one? This was plaine and grosse idolatrie. For seeing that God did bind him selfe to the Hierusalem by his word, namely that there he would be, and there he would be found: therefore it was idolatrie to beloue that he was any where else, or to seeke him in any other place. Therefore, when the people did deuise or choole any kind of worship which God had not chosen, we see howe sharply the Prophets did reprove them. For there is nothing which God so much detesteth, as to admiite or appointe for the seruice of God, that which he hath not commaunded. Wherefore election or choice belongeth not vnto vs: but we must yeelde obedience to the

God choo-
seth a place
for his ser-
uice: there-
fore we may
not chose it.

voice of the Lorde. Else shall that happen vnto vs which Ieremy threateneth: That they haue chosen will I reiect. These thinges destroy and confound the inuentions; the deuises and deuotions, the false and counterfet religions which we haue seene in the papacie. For whereas some gaue them selues to this order of religion & some to that: whereas they had certaine daies of abstinence, certaine meates, certaine Sainctes to call vppon, and such other like, if ye as he who commaunded all these thinges, their owne conscience will constrain them to aunswere that they were in deede of their owne choosing and their own deuiling. But this is to serue not God, but Satan. For God is not serued but when that is done which he hath commaunded. Wherefoze election or choise (as I said) pertaineth not to vs; but to God alone: but obedience belongeth to vs, so that what God hath commaunded, that must we doe.

If God doe
choose, then
commeth it
not of our
merite.

No good
intent but
that is grou-
ded vpon
the word.

Howeouer, the word of Choosing beatech downe all confidence and presumption of workes. For if he should say: I giue vnto you Zion for a reward, or this doe I to requite or to recompence you. It were as much as if he said, this doe I in respect of your desert. But when he saith: I haue chosen Zion according to myne owne will, he sheweth that he doth it without all respect of merites: so that he both condemneth all counterfet religion, and all confidence of merite. For voluntary worshippings and chosen religions pertaine to the devils diuinitie, And it helpeth vs nothing, that they are chosen of a good intent. For there is no good intent which is groundes vppon our owne iudgement, and not vpon the word of God, which ought to be the groundworke of all good intents. For he onely intendereth well, which knoweth that he is constrained to do this thing or that by the word of God. This word who to hath not, although he seeme in all things as holy as an Angel, beware of him, and auoid him as a deadly popson. This is a most certaine and infallible rule for vs to follow (which if we doe, we shall neuer be deceiued), if we demaund whether God hath required of vs by commaunded this thing or that. For he approueth nothing as good in his sight, which he hath not chosen. And this brie fly as touching the word of Choosing, I thought good to note.

Verse 14. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I haue a delike therein.

This

This is a singular promise, and such as God neuer made in any other place. Hereof Esay and the other Prophets seeme to gather, that Ierusalem should endure for euer, that is, until the Messias should come, who should make of a temporall, an eternall Ierusalem: As also the Angell sayth vnto Marie: that Christ should sitte vpon the throne of his father Dauid for euer. And here marke the sequelle of this promise. Ierusalem at this day is destroyed and gone, and yet this promise doth plainly shew, that this shall be the seate of the Lord for euer. Wherefore it followeth, as an infallible consequence, that he is come which hath established this kingdom for euer. For whereas it was destroyed in the captiuitie of Babylon, yet notwithstanding there were certaine remnantes reserved: The time also was appoynted howe long the captiuitie should continue: And moreover, there were yet both Kinges and Priestes remaining amongst them. But now there is none of all these thinges, as before we haue declared.

This is therefore a notable promise, that this Ierusalem shall be the seate and throne of the Lord for euer, and shall neuer be abolished. The Iewes presuming of this promise, did crucifie Christ, and committed all iniquitie. For they thought it not possible that Ierusalem should be destroyed, because of the promise which it had, that it should remaine for euer. But we haue heard that these thinges were promised conditionally: to witte, If they should keepe the covenant of the Lord and his testimonies. Ierusalem therefore continued vnto the coming of Christ. Afterward it was plagued for sinne, as other wicked cities and kingdomes were. In like maner the Prophets doe certainly promise that the Gospel should come out of Sion and a newe kingdome of Christe out of Ierusalem. Notwithstanding they say, that this Ierusalem should be greater then the whole earth, and the walles thereof should be the endes of the earth. These thinges can not be understood of the corporall Ierusalem, which notwithstanding was the first occasion of the beginning of the kingdom of Christ: but after wardes it was horribly destroyed: like as also the wicked sorte of Dauids posteritie were rooted out: but the godly remained vntill Christ was bozne.

Ierusalem
was destroyed:
notwithstanding
it was builded
vp againe by
Christ to remaine for
euer.

Moreover, it is euident that this election and choosing began vnder Dauid: For before that time the citie of Ierusalem belonged to the Jebusites: but vnder Dauid it was chosen by the pro-

will of God: to be a citie for the Kinges and Priestes, in such sort, that like as before the persons of the Priestes did not wander from tribe to tribe, but were alwayes certaine: so the persons and successions of the Kinges should not now be uncertainly wander as the Judges and the Princes did, which continued not in any certaine tribe, and here againe he vseth the worde of choosing, to confound the presumption & confidence of merite which was so grounded in their hartes, to the ende they might understand that this citie was appointed by the good pleasure of God to be a seate and harborow for religion and policie. For this deuillish vice was peculiar vnto the Iewes, that they gloried in their merites, their seruice and ceremonies. For this cause Moses also sharply reproveth them, and warneth them that they should not thinke they had obteyned these great benefites through their owne righteousness. Not for thy righteousness (saith he) hath the Lorde brought thee into this land. This deuillish presumption we see also to be in the Papacie: but much worse then it was amongst the people of God. For they vset that worship & seruice which was commaunded of God: But in Popery there is nothing but mans inuencions, which are the worshipping of idolls.

Nowe, whereas the Lord promisseth that he will dwell in Ierusalem, this seemeth to be but a small matter. But we must looke to the Paucitie of the inhabitation, and then the place, be it neuer so base and contemptible, shall become glorious. For this did the Lord promise, that he whom the heauens could not comprehend, should be found in Ierusalem. This is therefore a singular promise, when men may knowe and enioy a certaine place wherein God may be founde, that they wander not in the imaginations of their owne hartes, every man choosing vnto him selfe a God, or a place where he may serue God according to his owne fantasie, as Ieroboam did, which is horrible idolatrie. Wherefore it is the great mercie of God that he hath appoynted a certaine place for his word and his whole seruice, to the which place the Scripture attributeth this excellent name and title, that it is called the holy citie: not for the holines of the people inhabiting the same, but for the holines of the Lord sanctifying all things by his word.

This glory hath the Church of the newe Testament also, in that she hath for her head, not the Pope, (as the wicked Papists doe most wickedly affirme): but Christ sitting at the right hande

The Iewes
presumed of
their owne
merites.

Deut. 9.
The presump-
tion of the
Papists.

It is a great
benefite of
God that he
hath appoin-
ted a certain
place for his
seruice.

Ierusalem
called the
holy citie, &
why.
The glory
of the Church
of the new
Testament.

of the father, who is present with his word & Sacraments. This is an inestimable glory, which dependeth not upon our righteousness, but upon the great mercie of God accepting, approving and commending all things that we doe for Christ his sonnes sake our head.

But the citie of Ierusalem found Satan her deadly and cruel enemy in this respect also, because it was as it were, the worke-house of God, in the which he dayly exercised and wrought all manner of holp workes, blessings & benefites for his people. Yet was it of God notwithstanding mercifully preserved, to this end that his people should not be uncerteine where he would be found, worshipped and heard. And here agayne we are admonished, that all these things come of gift and not of merite, of mercie and not of workes. For he hath chosen vnto him selfe this rest, & it hath pleased him to dwell in this place. So it cometh not of our desert that we enjoy the Gospell and other great blessings of God. All these are the giftes of God, through his great mercie and goodness bestowed vpon vs for Christes sake.

Satan a continuall and a cruell enemy to Ierusalem.

Verse. 15. Her vitailles I will blesse, and will satisfie her poore with bread.

This word vitailles signifieth properly a pray. But why doth the Scripture so call the sustenance whereby we liue? Euen for the same cause for the which Christ calleth it our dayly bread. So that, like as beastes doe dayly followe their pray and finde it, they sowe not, they labour not, but by pray they attayne all that they haue: Euen so shoulde we not heape vppes that through couetousnes and incredulitie, which may serue vs for many peres, but shoulde daily looke for and receiue at the handes of the Lord, that which is dayly offered vnto vs, (employing our labour notwithstanding as a meane to attaine the same) & therewith be content, as the beast is when he hath obtained his pray. For couetousnes & incredulitie is not content with present benefites, although the Lord doe neuer so faithfully promise to feede vs, and giue vs all things necessary for this life. Thus the Scripture properly & verily aptly calleth our foode and sustenance a pray which cometh vnto vs taking no care, but labouring & leauing the care vnto God, as our Saviour Christ teacheth vs, *Mat. 6.* who commaundeth

Why? Scripture calleth our foode and sustenance a pray.

vs to labour and diligently endeavour to doe that belongeth to our vocation: for of the Hebrewes that is counted labour which euery day hath and bringeth with it. But withall he commaundeth vs to take no thought for worldly thinges, but to leaue all carefulnes vnto the Lorde who promisseth that we shall no moze lacke then the birdes and other beastes doe, which haue that is sufficient, and yet labour not nor make prouision for the same. For this is not the ende of our labour, that in this life we should still seeke to enrich our selues and neuer be satisfied. For although we haue the treasures of this worlde, yet with this life we must forsake them. And like as this life is not certeine, but is as a pray, which we so long enioy as it pleaseth the Lorde: euen so is the portion of our sustenance but, as you would say, a snatch, wherewith we must be content to liue, and not be carefull for the time to come. So doth this worlde condemne all faithlesse carefulnes and carefull incredulitie, wherewith notwithstanding we can nothing preuaile.

A saying of
Cyprian wor-
thy to be re-
membred.

Cyprian hath a goodly saying to this effect and worthie to be remembred. Christians (saith he) which haue forsaken this worlde, doe so litle care for earthly thinges, that they aske no moze but foode and payment. For their hartes are fixed vppon the eternall treasures of the worlde to come. They seeke to liue but from day to day, as strangers hauing here no continuing citie, but looking for one to come. And good cause there is why? Disciple of Christ should desire no moze but for the present day, which is commaunded not to be careful for to morowe. For it is an absurde thing that we should desire to liue long in this worlde, which pray for the speedy comming of the kingdom of Christ.

Bread what
it signifieth.

That which followeth: & her poore I will satisfie with bread, is a phrase or kind of speech well knowne. For breade the Hebrewes are wont to call meate and drinke, like as we call vitalles whatsoeuer pertaineth to our foode and sustenance. These thinges he promisseth, but to the poore: for so he calleth his people. For he seeth the condition of his Church to be such, that in the middes of the riches and wealth of the worlde, it onely hungreth & thirsteth. The pouertie of the Leuites was exceeding great vntill they aspired to honoz and dignitie, as also our Prelates doe. For Satán so ruleth in these matters, that he neuer ceaseth to oppresse the ministerie as much as in him lieth, with pouertie and contempt. This many not contented to beare, doe fall so farre, that rather then

then they will lack, they will teach the thinges that please men, that so they may attaine to wealth and dignitie.

The godly must therefore hold fast this promise: that the Lord saith he will giue bread vnto his poore. For both these thinges shall come to passe, that they shall haue bread, and yet they shall be poore. And why? Because the kingdom of Christ is not of this world. Let those therefore which are of the ministry, and are the principall part of this kingdom, be content to suffer reproch, hatred and contempt, or else let them be no ministers. For the inheritance of this world is not promised to the godly, but the assured and everlasting inheritance of the life to come. Wherefore Christ calleth the poore in spirite, blessed and happy, which notwithstanding must suffer many calamities. On the other side, those that abound in wealth and are full, he calleth miserable and unhappy, because the time shall come when they shall weepe. Wherefore let vs thus make our account, that if we wil be the people of God, we must in this life content our selues with those thinges which are necessary for the back and the belly. All other incommodities let vs patiently beare, and ouercome, in hope of the glory whiche shall be reuealed vpon the sonnes of God.

Verse. 16. And will cloth her Priestes with saluation, and her Sainctes shall shewt for ioy.

This promise is farre moze excellent then that whereof we haue now spoken. For here God promisseth that he will so gouern the Pastors and Ministers, that they shall be pure & holy through the word and haue a good conscience. If we would compare these thinges with that small defecte of corporall thinges, we should beare it much moze cherefully and patiently. When I was a Yonke, I liued in most miserable darkenes and infinite snares of conscience: where through the multitude of mens traditions, sinne brought forth sinne. I was bound against nature to that impure and incestuous single life. Here, if a man should haue asked me what I would giue to redeeme the quietnes and peace of conscience, and those inestimable graces and glory which we enjoy at this day by the word and the spirite of God: I would humbly haue cast downe my self prostrate vpon the ground & giuen my life gladly for this onely quietnes and libertie of conscience in Christ.

Temporall incommodities of the Church are recompensed with spirituall benefites & blessings.

But now, when we are clothed in deede with saluation through great and assured promises of the forgiveness of sinnes and eternal life, we forget these spirituall riches, and we complaine that we are not made Kings and Princes in this corporall life. We doe not preferre our eternall and spirituall glory before these transitory and corruptible things. And what a soule ingratitude is it, so to be offended with this externall pueritie, and not to ioy and reioyce rather in these inestimable treasures of the spirite? Who would not rather hauing these giftes of the spirite, begge his bread from doze to doze, then enioy the riches and treasures of all the Prelates and the whole kingdom of the Pope? Whome we see in this wealth of the world, because they are enemies to the worde, to be most desperate and damnable: For they are without remission of sinnes, hope of eternall life, the knowledge of Christ, and all the heauenly benefits and blessings, which we by the world doe so plentifully enioy. Wherefore if we be neuer so poore, afflicted, vexed, full of anguish and heauyness, contemptible and abominable in the sight of the world, yet let vs comfort our selues with this, that we haue the treasures of the kingdome of heauen, that by faith in the worde we shall haue the victorie ouer sinne, death and hell, and that we are wholly clothed with saluation. How many were oppressed with desperation before this happy age wherein we liue? But if they had had this knowledge of grace and these consolations which we now haue by the worde, would they not thinke yet, haue sustained the losse of all the riches in the world and all worldly felicity? For when a man feelleth the wrath of God and desperation, then infinite riches and treasures are nothing esteemed. What doth knowledge, learning, wisdom, what doe possessions, kingdoms and dominions then auaille? All these thinges who would not gladly forsake and cast away, that onely he might haue his conscience quieted and at peace with God? Wherefore Paule very aptly calleth the knowledge of grace, an absolute or a full perfection, because all good thinges are contained in this knowledge. For if we liue here by begging our bread, is not this well recompensed in that we are nourished with the food of Angells, eternall life, and Christ him selfe? Who so fauoreth not these thinges, let him seeke for a Cardinalls hatte with the ministers and souldiers of Satan. Let him seeke the wealth,

A singular
consolation
against po-
uerty and
contempt.

wealth, the riches and glorie of this world. As for me, I seeke neither riches; which I esteeme aboue all worldly wealth and treasures. Thirtie yeares agoe, if I had had the true knowledge and understanding but of one psalme, I should haue thought my selfe to be a God: for then all thinges were full of grosse ignorance, horrible abominations and all kindes of idolatrie. But now, when the Lord hath opened vnto vs, as it were a flood of heauenly wisdom and knowledge, we are buehankfull and become so worldly, so fine and so delicate, that we will lacke nothing that the world hath. But Esay sayth, The bedde is strait, and there is no place for both. Albeit the thinges we doe not condemne: for they are the giftes of God, and therefore let those which haue them, being lawfully gotten and in the feare of God, vse them with thanksgiving and without offence: and let those, to whom they are not giuen, beare their want and necessitie with christian patience and without grudging: As Paule sayth, that he is able through Christ to doe or to beare all thinges, to abound and to lacke, to be full and to be hungry, to be praysed and to be dispraysed, &c. and that because we haue a kingdom in heauen, and we looke for a Sauiour, who hath begunne to giue vnto vs these thinges by the word and Sacraments: And if he leaue vnto vs no more but the ministry of the word sincere and sound, we care not much for all other thinges.

This is therefore a singular promise and consolation, that the Church and the word shall endure to the ende of the world, not by the counsell or wisdom of man, but by God him selfe clothing his ministers with saluation. Albeit therefore that vnder Ahas and other vngodly Kings all thinges were full of idolatrie, yet were there certein Propheets by whom the word was preserved. And in the time of Christ the blindness of that nation was incredible, and such as (I thinke) neuer was before. Notwithstanding there was Anna and Simeon which then acknowledged and preached Christ. This is in deede the great worke of God thus clothing with saluation, that is, with his mightie and victorious word, with his true and holy worshippe, his ministers, that out of the mouthes of men our saluation and our glory may be heard: This is a farre more excellent clothing then were those Aaronicall garments of Moises, that the Pastours and Preachers of the Gospell are furnished and adorned with the wordes of saluation

God & man
mon can not
dwell togi-
ther.

Esay 49.20.

Philipp. 4.

and the doctrine of truth, whereby they may be able, not onely to instruct the people committed to their charge, but also to confute and confound the aduersaries. For to this ende serueth the garment and the clothing of saluation, that is to say, of victorie which is obteyned by the pure word and holy ministratione.

The second part of this promise is, that he will giue successe and fruite vnto the word: to witte, that so many as heare these Priestes, these Pastors and Preachers and beleue the word, are sanctified and their hearts are replenished with peace and ioy: they faithfully trust in God, whom they know to be well pleased with them, and of whom they beleue that they are beloued. This peace of the heart is our kingdom of heauen which we haue in this life. For it is an incomparable treasure: in comparison whereof all the kingdoms and riches in the world are but dyt and dunge. So the Psalmist ioyne these two things together, that by the Preachers and Ministers he will giue his mightie and victorious word and faith vnto those that heare them, that so all may be saued, and with ioyfull heart may prayse and magnifie such a gracious and a mercifull God.

The peace of conscience is an inestimable gift of God.

The spiritual blessing of Church must not be esteemed according to the outward shewe and face thereof.

He that beholdeth the outward shewe and face of the Church, will iudge these things to be false and false otherwise. For these wordes are spiritual, and must not be vnderstand according to the flesh. For if a man follow the outward appearance, he will rather iudge the Pope and the ministers of Satan to be clothed with saluation. For they triumph in great securitie even when they think and speake those things which are most contrary to Christ and the true Church. On the other side the Christians of the true Church are afflicted, vexed, tormented within and without of Satan and cruell persecutors. No man will thinke these things to be saluation or ioy, but miseries and perpetuall calamities. But turne thou thine eyes away from the outward shewe and appearance, and behold that Paule which speaketh to thee in the word and promisseth to be mercifull vnto thee. If therefore thou be in the fauour of God, if he hate thee not but loue thee, if he cherish and defend thee, I pray thee, what are all the calamities in the world? Are they not all, be they neuer so terrible and intolerable, swallowed vpp in that bottomlesse sea of the infinite and unmeasurable mercies of God?

Ynste

Verse 17. There will I make the horne of Dauid to budde: I haue ordeyned a light for myne anoynted.

He continueth in the promise of the kingdom & the priesthoode, that not onely the saluation and toy of the Priestes and the faithfull people should be defended against fantastickall spirites which that nation was neuer without, but also that this kingdom should be defended against outward enemies and other nations abroad, and at home against seditious persons. For like as amonges the Leuites there were many fantastickall and hereticall spirites: so in the other estates there were also many seditious heades, as the histories doe shewe. Howe many had Saul which woulde not acknowledge him for their King? After that Saul was killed, and Dauid was saluted and taken of the trybe of Iuda for their King, all the rest of the tribes forsooke him and followed Ishbosheth the sonne of Saul. This dissention endured seven yeares and six monethes as it is declared 2. Samuel 2. Now who knoweth not what stormes of seditions and battayles Dauid afterwards suffered in the kingdom? Agayne, after the death of Salomon this kingdome was vexed with infinite seditions by wicked Ieroboam. Agaynst these enymities the psalme armeth and confirmeth the people, and promisseth that the horne of Dauid shall endure, being exalted and stablished by the Lord himselfe. Such was the condition of this kingdom, that the pure and holy Priesthoode Satan corrupted by sectes and schismes, counterpoise the sound and true doctrine of the worde: and in the civil government he stirred vpp rebellious and disobedient persons. Thus Satan rageth with lying and falshood agaynst the spiritual kingdom, and with murders against the politike government, that offences of lying and murder might no where be lacking.

Therefore, as this kingdome must not be esteemed and judged according to the outward face thereof (for then it shall appeare to be a weak, a seditious and a miserable kingdome): so the Church hath also certayne promises of peace: but yet so, that for the most parte it is vexed with offences, with persecutions and other afflictions. Therefore we must rest in the greatness and excellencie of the promise, in the Paieritie of the worde, and in the authoritie of the promiser, who hath promised salua-

A promise concerning the defence and preservation of the Church.

2. Sam. 2. 10.

The outward shew & face of the Church.

tion, but yet so notwithstanding, that in the common wealch there shall remayne seditious and rebellious persons, and in the Church heretiks and sectaries. Here haue we neede to be of good courage and comfort, assuring our selues, that if we were of the world, the world would loue vs. If we would flatter the Pope and teach the thinges that please him, he would loue vs, he would not persecute vs, he would not throw out the thunderboltes of cursing & excommunication against vs as he doth. They therefore which will be of the true Church, must prepare them selues with a valiant mind to beare and ouercome these offences, resting vppon the promises of God, which doe wholly consist in this, that he is and will be louing and gracious vnto vs, that he will neuer leaue vs comfortles, and that the enemies of the world, rage they neuer so furiously, shall not preuaile against the Church, because the Lord hath promised that he wil there make the hojne of Dauid to budd. Some do understand that by this world [to budd] Christ, in whom the kingdom of Dauid is truly established, is conuertly here shadowed and signified. Against this interpretation I will not greatly stand: and yet I rather rest in the simplicitie of the letter, which seemeth playnely to promise vnto Dauid a certeyne place and posteritie. The name of budding he vseth here, to signifie an encrease: and to encrease is to be preserved. So the Church buddeth and encreaseth (although outwardly it seemeth to be diminished and defaced) because God preserveth and encreaseth it daily by his word and his spirit. The sense and meaning then is this, that God will blesse, defend and preserve the hojne of Dauid, that is to say, the kingdome, the strength and the power of that nation. For here he would specially notifie the person, to this ende that the posteritie might be certeyne of the house, of the person and of the place of this kingdom.

That which followeth: I haue ordeyned a light for mine annoynted, is an hebrewe phrase: which kinde of speech we also doe vse: As when we saye that Iohn Hus was the lyyght of the Church of Bohemia. Leonard Kesar, for his singular confession of the sayth, and constancie in the truth of the Gospell, was the lyyght of Bauaria. This maner of phrase is vset also 2. Samuel 21. That the lyyght of Israell be not quenched. And in the 2. Chronic. 21. as touching Ioram. For God would not destroy the house of Dauid, because he had promised to geue a lyyght to

to him and to his children for ever: For Ioram was the laste of the posteritie of Salomon. They that reigned after him, were of the posteritie of Nathan, which at the captiuitie of Babylon, when the Citie was destroyed and the Kinge in captiuitie and bandes, seemed to be viterly extinguished. But the Loyde chastised both the place and the person: he neither chaunged nor reiected them. Againe, at the birth of Christ the kingdome was translated from the stocke of David to the Machabees and the Romanes. Wherefore as touching the outwarde appearance, this light was viterly quenched: but to the spiritall man and to the eyes of faith, it was yet glorious. For there were certaine persons remayning of the tribe of Iuda, of whome afterwarde Christ was bozne. Wherefore he calleth the preservation of the kingdome, a light: but in respect of the thinge it selfe, and not of the outward shew: for thereby it seemed that both the place and the person were cleane gone: for God through idolatrie and presumption was constrained to destroy them. So the kingdome was taken from the tribe of Iuda. Then came Christ, who builded a new Ierusalem which shall remaine for ever.

There is also a certaine vehemencie in this word: haue prepared: for it signifieth that this kingdome was defended, not onely against all enemies and conspirators at home and amonges them selues: but also against all the deuills and the gates of hell, euen to the conuining of Christ. Yet notwithstanding the historie sheweth howe it was humbled through many calamities and afflictions. Likewyse we haue a promise as touching the Church, that it shall continue vnto the ende of the worlde, and that the gates of hell shall not preuaile against it: and yet who knoweth not howe it hath beene humbled, oppressed and in a manner abolished vnder the Pope? There was taught and worshipped, not Christ, but the virgine Mary, the Apostles, &c. So that according to the saying of Christ, except the Loyde had shortened those dayes, no flesh shoulde haue beene saued. Wherefore we must regarde the Paierie and power of the promiser, more then all the offences that either the worlde or the deuill can raise vpe against vs: and let vs not be discouraged when the Pope with his curse, and the worlde with the sword doe rage against the Church. For although the Church neither in number nor in power be like vnto y^e aduersaries, yet shall it endure and the

To prepare
a light, what
it signifieth.

Mark. 13. 20

1. Iohn. 4.

aduersaries shall perish. For he is greater that is in vs, then he that is in the worlde: and the word, because it is the eternall power of God, shall easily overcome Satan and all the furies of hel.

Verse. 17. His enemies will I cloth with shame, but on him his crowne shall flourish.

Not the King of Babylon, not of Syria, not of EDOM, not of Moab, not of Egypte, by itselfe no enemy shall preuaile against this kingdom: but this kingdome shall stand invincible and mightely established euen vnto Christ, and the enemies of this kingdome shall be all clothed with confusion. This light shall neuer be quenched vntill he come which shall fulfill all thinges. This thzone, although it be neuer so contemptible and odious to the whole worlde, shall remaine in glozzy, nor onely before men, but also before the worlde. Neither could Satan yet euer bying to passe (although with all his force, power and policie he hath continually attempted it) that the posteritie of Dauid should be extinguished before Christ should be bozne. To these promises, as vnto a sure staffe, yea as vnto a strong rocke, the Saints of God haue alwaies leaned in great calamities, wherewith Satan exercised this people to the ende he might hinder the promise concerning Christ. And in deede Antiochus, about all other laboured with maine and might, to roote out and to destroy this people for euer. But, as the Psalme here promisseth, because he was an enemy to this holy nation, therefore he was clothed with shame and confusion.

But on him his crowne shall flourish: That is to say, although the crowne of Dauid often tymes shall seeme in outward appearance to decay and perishe: yet by a secret and a diuine power it shall be renewed, plenteously fructifie, and gloriously flourish. But the trueth of this promise resteth in Christe, of whose kingdome there is no ende. For vppon his head hath flourished a crowne which could neuer decay as the crownes of worldly Princes do. For the crowne of the sonne of God is farre otherwise: to whom all power is giuen both in heauen and in earth. In the meane time the Lorde preserved this temporall kingdome, vntill that was accomplished in the person of his onely begotten sonne, which he would signifie vnder those shadowes and figures. But because

Psalm. 11.

because this externall kingdome of Dauid was of this world and earthly; therefore was it but temporall and for a time. But the kingdome of Christ; because it is not of this world; but heavenly and spirituall, is eternall and shall endure for ever.

This psalme conteyneth a prayer for the preservation of the word, and publike peace: For this must we specially desire in our prayer, except we will be found unthankfull. Moreover; we must not be offended when we see that the common wealth is disturbed through the disobedience of the people or wickedness of the Magistrates: or the Church vexed through false brethren and heresies. For thus will it be and no otherwise, that where so ever the word, sowne with publike peace and concord, is sowne; there Satan that spying and murdering spirit will alwayes goe about to trouble them both. And this is the cause of seditions, of warres, of furies and heresies. Wherefore we must be well armed; that seeing our aduersary slepeth not, we may valiantly oppose our selves against these offences, and thinke that they are certain warnings, and often times also rodde of punishments which God sendeth to amend us; and not to destroy us. Our sinnes have deserved more greivous punishments. Better it is therefore to be afflicted of the wicked world; then to be condemned and perish for ever. God be mercifull unto us, and turne from us that we have so lustily deserved;

The 133. Psalme. Behold how good, &c.

In this psalme the Prophet commendeth love and concord in both the kingdome, temporall and spirituall, but specially in the spirituall kingdome; and for the same he giueth thanks unto God. For this is not onely a singular gift of God when there is unity in the Church and quietnes in the common wealth: but it is also the founteyne and headspring of inestimable benefites and blessings. Here peradventure you will aske where David learned that these are so excellent and so profitable things. But he which maketh the historie of Dauid; shall easily perceiue that the maisters of whom he learned this knowledge; were Saul, Doeg and other monsters in the Court of Saul his predecessour: also Absolon, A-

David had

The argu-
ment of this
Psalme. 133
David had
learned by
experience
that there is
nothing bet-
ter the peace
and concord

C iii.

It profiteth that this life is naught in the which we neither regard
the great gifts of God; nor yet acknowledge them to be his
gifts.

So maintain this gift; it is not in the power of the temporall
or the spirituall Magistrate: but men being both blind and deafe,
will needs doe, not that they like and approve, but that time and
Satan psoneth them into. It is the Day alone therefore which
is both the giuer and maintainer of peace: which preferreth
kingdoms and common wealthes, that they fall not to better ruine
by warres, uprores and tumultes. This gift the Psalmist com-
maundeth vs to acknowledge, and exhorteth vs to be thankful for
the same. For it is the mightie hande of God that there is any
peace or con corde amongst vs. And thanks be vnto God, that we
haue this knowledge, that peace is the gifte of God, although we
be not able of our selues to maintain and defende the same. For
this is a meane, not onely to stay vs that we despair not in these
outrages and hurly burlyes of the wicked world, but also to bring
vs to happy prayer, that God would preserve that peace which he
hath giuen vs, and defende vs from the power of Satan and wic-
ked men.

Beholde how good and how comely a thing it is, bre-
thren to dwell euertogither.

Dauid had bene in many and great dangers, and by experi-
ence had learned in the troubles which he suffered through greace
and long sessions into other afflictions, not onely what mischief
there is in discord and the doctrine of error: but also what inesti-
mable good things doe proceede of con corde and sincere doctrine.
Wherefore he assureth him self that God preferreth, governeth &
blesseth these things. For the Psalmist treateth of both kinds, that
is; of the peace and con corde of the common wealth, and of the
Church: like as they also in nature are coupled together. For the
peace of the common wealth is also the peace of the Church, for
that in the time of peace the worde of God may be freely publi-
shed and preached. Wherein he calleth as well those that live in
any societie togither, as also the Ministers and preachers of the
word. These live in vnitie and con corde; when they serue the peo-
ple with one doctrine & sound doctrine, when the people obey and

Satan ioy-
ning with
originall
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nature, draw
eth men to
that which
they knowe
to be euill.

brethren,
to dwell
euertogither.

Brethren.

believe the word, and when there is no contention among them. This is a singular gift of God; and not onely a sofly, but also a profitable and a comely thing in the Church. So is it also in the common wealth, when the lawes are obeyed and the Magistrate hath a care of the people: and againe, when the subiectes doe loue and reuerence the Magistrates and obey their authoritie. These gifts the Psalmist exhorteth vs to acknowledge and to be thankfull for the same.

Verse. 2. It is like to the precious oynment vppon the heade that runneth downe vpon the bearde euen vppon Aarons beard, which went downe on the borders of his garments.

This is a homely and familiar phrase of the holy Ghost. The place is knowne 30. of Exodus, where Moses was commanded to make a certaine precious oynment, with this inhibition, that it should be made of none else but of him, nor employed to any other use then to anoint the beards of the high Priest. With this oynment the Psalmist compareth vnitie and concord as an holy & heavenly thing: whiche by no power or policie of man can either be gotten or kept. For although it be giuen euento the wicked also, as we may see in those kingdoms which are out of the Church, yet is it the gift of God, and a most holy gift, which ought to serue especially vnto holy uses, for the aduancing of religion, for the confirmation of matrimony, for the education of children: and for the maintenance and continuance of all honestie and godlines.

In that he saith: from the head, he sheweth the nature of true concord. For like as the oynment ranne downe from the heade of Aaron the high priest, vpon his beard, and so descended vnto the borders of his garment: euen so true concord in doctrine and brotherly loue, floweth as a precious oynment, by the wisdome of the spirit, from Christ the high priest and head of the Church, vnto all the members of the same. For by the beard and extreme partes of the garment he signifieth, that as farre as the church reacheth, so farre spreadeth that vnitie which floweth from Christ her head. Or by the beard we may vnderstand those to whome the office of teaching belongeth, because the bearde is ioyned vnto the mouth, which is the instrument of doctrine, and by the extreme partes of the

Concord is
compared to
a precious
oyment.

The beard
what it sig-
nifieth.

the garment the rest of a Church, which is the garment of Christ. This similitude expressed most lively how great the benefit of the spirit of concord is wherewith all the members of Christ are appointed; for it maketh their life sweete and pleasant, in so much, that whatsoever they do, it giveth a sweet odor in the sight of God.

If the unquiet spirits which trouble the Church at this day, could beleue that the peace and concord of the Church is such an holy and a pleasant ointment to the Lord, separate from all profane uses: they would be more sober and circumspect then they be. But because they beleue it not, therefore they employ this holy ointment to unholy uses, seeking thereby their owne glory. Yea, they turne the psalme cleane contrary, and say in their hearts: Behold how pleasant a thing it is to trouble the churchmen: they would not have them to enjoy this holy ointment, that is, to dwell and live together in this heavenly concord. The le we must lie to these we must in no wise be like, but must learne that the unity of the Church is the gifte of God, which we must defend and maintaine with all our power. For there is nothing more pleasant in the sight of God and his Angels, then when the pastors and governors of the Churches doe dwell together in godly concord, teaching and following with one consent, one true, sincere and unfeigned doctrine.

Betweene the Pope and his rable there is great concord: for there is a concord even amongst churmes: as there was betwene Judas and the Phariseis. But this is not the concord which the psalme here speaketh of: but the psalme commendeth that concord which is amongst those that haue the pure and sincere worde. Therefore the Prophet here useth a similitude which onely pertaineth to Aaron, named to be a high priest by Gods owne mouth, signifying thereby that this concord is spread by the preachers of the word, throughout the whole body of the Church: so that, not onely the body it selfe is refreshed with this ointment, but also the sweete smell thereof is dispersed every where, and the fame of the Church is glorious both before God & men, those I meane which vnderstand and acknowledge this heavenly benefice.

Verse 3. As the dew of Hermon which falleth vpon the mountaines of Sion: for there the Lord appointed the blessing and life for ever.

Against the
Anabaptists
and other
Sectaries, e-
nemics to
the peace &
quietnes of
the Church.

The record
of the Pa-
pists.

Antiquities of
the Church
of England
from the
beginning
to the
present
time

to be shewd forth into God for such a singular gift: both in the common wealth and in the Church. So shall it come to passe, that we shall seeke and endy this blessing and life: as the holy Ghost hath promised.

The. 1. 34. Psalm. *Behold, praise ye the Lord: glorify him in his holy temple, and in his church.* *Behold, praise ye the Lord: glorify him in his holy temple, and in his church.*

This is the last of the Psalms which are called the Psalms of degrees. In the which we have heard many weighty and profitable pointes of doctrine as touching all the articles in a manner, of Christian doctrine; namely of Justification of venition of sinnes, of the crosse, of charite and brotherly love; of macerimonie of chastity, of our owne, &c. as though the prophet had wanted to comprisse in these thort Psalms the summe and effect of all such things as are to be taught unto the people. Nowe therefore he concludeth in this psalme, the whole matter which he tooke in hand to treat of: As we also doe when in the ende of our preachings we pray that God would preserve his word amongst vs, and that we may continue in the same unto the ende. For when the word is purely taught, all things are safe, holy & pure, although the gates of hell rage against vs neuer so much, and we lose, not only our goods, but also our liues. For what harme haue we thereby, so that our soules may be saved: It is the word therefore alone that preserveth all good things. But if that be lost or corrupted, then all good things are lost: For like as, if the Sunne and light of the world should be taken away, he that walketh walketh in darkenes: so if the word be darkned and corrupted, in what misery and daunger is the common wealth. For then neither Magistrate, nor subject, nor servant knoweth what he ought to doe: but all things are wrapped up in error and horrible darknes.

Therefore this psalme exhorteth vs to pray, that the Lord would preserve and continue his word amongst vs; and every one of vs to endeavour with this service to helpe the Church. For although the Church is neuer without heretikes, like as also the common wealth is neuer without seditious persons: yet so long as the word remaineth sound and uncorrupt, it can not be but that many good things and many good men also will remaine. I take this

What pointes
of doctrine
David intrea-
teth of in the
Psalms of
degrees.

and praiseth
the Lord
in his church

this Psalm therfore to be as a conclusion of those things whiche were spoken of before. In þ which he exhorteth vs to giue thanks vnto the Lord for the benefite of his word, and to pray for the preservation and continuance thereof, for as much as, if it flourish, there will alwaies be founde some good men which will leade a goodly and a holy life. Therfore he saith.

This Psalm is as it were a conclusion of those things that goe before.

Verse. 1. Behold, praise ye the Lord all ye seruantes of the Lord, ye that by night stand in the house of the Lord;

To blesse signifieth not onely priuately to giue thanks vnto the Lord, but also publikely to praise the Lord, to preach and to publish his word. And this can not be done without the praise also of the mercie and goodnes of the Lord our Creator, our defender and our redeemer, which hath provided for vs and giueth vnto vs all things pertaining not onely to this our corporall life, but also to our euertasting life & felicitie in the kingdom of God. And albeit this house: seruantes of God; belongeth here properly to the ministers of the Church, yet generally it comprehendeth all those which profess and embrace the true and sincere doctrine of the Gospell. For it is the duty euen of those which are not in the ministry of the word, to confesse the word, & to acknowledge and praise the benefites of God. Wherefore with one hart and minde (saith he) ioyne ye all together: continue in the worde; confesse, preach, praise and magnifie the worde, that whiles all the worlde besides dishonoureth & blasphemeth God, ye may blesse him, because he is mercifull. Then shall it come to passe, that ye shall ouercome all your enemies, though ye be to them in number farre unlike.

To blesse what it signifieth.

But what meaneth he by these wordes: which by night stande in the house of the Lord? Did they obserue certaine howers in the night after the maner of the Papistes? You must note that it is a kinde of speech proper vnto the Hebrewes, and is as much to say, as morning & euening, that is to say, continually. As he saith also in an other Psalm: From the morning watche euen vntill the night. Paule expresseth this sentence with other wordes: Let the word of Christ dwell in you, plenteously, saith he. And our Saviour Christ teacheth, that we must pray alwaies. For where as the night season is appointed for sleepe, he that will blesse in the night, will do þ same also in the day, & so he will be alwaies blessing.

*Psalm. 129.
Coloss. 3. 16.*

Luke, 18. 1.

Verse. 2. Lift vp your hands to the Sanctuary & praise the Lord.

As much to say, as when ye pray in the Sanctuary, lift vp pure and holy hands. For he that prayeth in that holy place, must offer vp pure and holy prayers. So saith S. Paule also: lifting vp pure hands, &c. for else ye shall pray in vaine. Pure hands signifie innocencie, from blood, extortion, spoile & robbery. The Prophet therefore setteth forth here two sortes of men comming to the temple & praying. Some there be that come and pray in innocencie and holines. Some againe pray in hypocritie, hauing their hands defiled with blood. The prayer of such is sinne, as the psalme sayth. Paul teacheth in like manner concerning prayer: Pray (saith he) without wrath or doubting. Also our Saviour Christ saith: If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, goe thy way and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. For this is a common thing, that hypocrites, when they haue done all þe iniury they can against their brethren, are not only without all remorse of conscience, but also they make a great shew of religion and holines, & bragge of the Gospell more then the true Christians doe. Against these the psalme speaketh & warneth them that when they pray in the holy place, they ought to be pure & holy. For who so enuermore prayeth, & is possessed with the sinne of couetousnes, fleshly lust or any other deuill, to him the Lord sayth: V What hast thou to do to declare mine ordinances, that thou shouldest take my couenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behinde thee? For when thou seest a theefe, thou runnest with him, & thou art partaker with the adulterers &c. Such was þe prayer of the Pharisee, which departed out of þe temple iustificied. For this is a common euill among men, þe they which are most impure & wicked, doe glory more of God & his word, then such as are godly & feare God in deede. Wherefore the Scripture expressely declareth, þe such there be as take þe name of God in their mouths, and yet in hart & life are polluted and wicked. And in this place the prophet inuiceth against hypocrites, whiche thinke that when they pray, God seeth not þe uncleannes of their hart. This is therefore a necessary prayer, þe first God would giue vnto vs his word, & defend the same against all vaine spirits & beastes, and secondly that he would preserve vs in innocencie & keepe vs from hypocritie.

Verse.

Verse. 3. The Lord that hath made heauen & earth, blesse thee out of Sion.

As touching Sion we haue sayd befoze, that God would haue, not only certeine ceremonies & certeine persons, but also a certein place for his seruice & worship, lest the people should wander vncertainly, and choose vnto them selues peculiar places to worship God in. Now, for as much as this thing was not without offence, (for what can be moze absurd and contrary to reason, then that the God of heauen and earth should be shut vpp in that darkenes?) therefore to confirme their mindes herein, he sayth that the Lord which dwelleth in Sion, is the maker of heauen and earth.

This haue we often declared, and necessary it is that it should be often repeted, lest we should chose vnto our selues straunge and peculiar kindes of worship. For as in the olde Testament there was a certaine place, certeine persons and certeine times to the which God had bound, as you would say, his seruice: so we in the newe Testament do find the father in Christ. In Christ the father is worshipped: but without Christ he can neither be worshipped nor found: but what so euer is deuised for the seruice of God without Christ, is damnable and accursed.

The summe and effect therefore of all together is this: O ye Priests, ye Pastors and Ministers of the word, to you I speake, you I do admonish, that ye follow the word faithfully and do your office purely. For whiles the word and the ministry are sound & vncorrupt, there is nothing that can hurt vs. For although Satan & the world do assaile vs, what then? If God be with vs, who can be against vs? Let this be therefore your speciall care and endeour, that the word may remaine pure and vncorrupt, and pray that the Lord would assist you herein and blesse your labour, for of all the blessings of God this is the greatest. Which might be sayd in moe wordes, but let this suffice. Now it is our duetie likewise in this light of the worde, to endeour by all meanes to doe the same, lest that through our vnthankfulnes the worde be taken from vs againe: and to pray for the Churches, that God would blesse them for Iesus Christ his sonnes sake our Lord & our Redemer. Amen.

THE ENDE